St. Charles Seminary
Carthagena, Ohio 45822

## Sex, Art & Camille Paglia

# COMMONWEAL

$2.00 June 4, 1993

PHILIP J. MURNION on Robert Wuthnow

CATHERINE WALSH on Women-church

PETER DOWNS on split shifts, split families

PAUL JASKUNAS on migrating Anglo-Catholics

ABIGAIL McCARTHY on Americans abroad

FRANK McCONNELL on Rush Limbaugh

Screen: RICHARD ALLEVA

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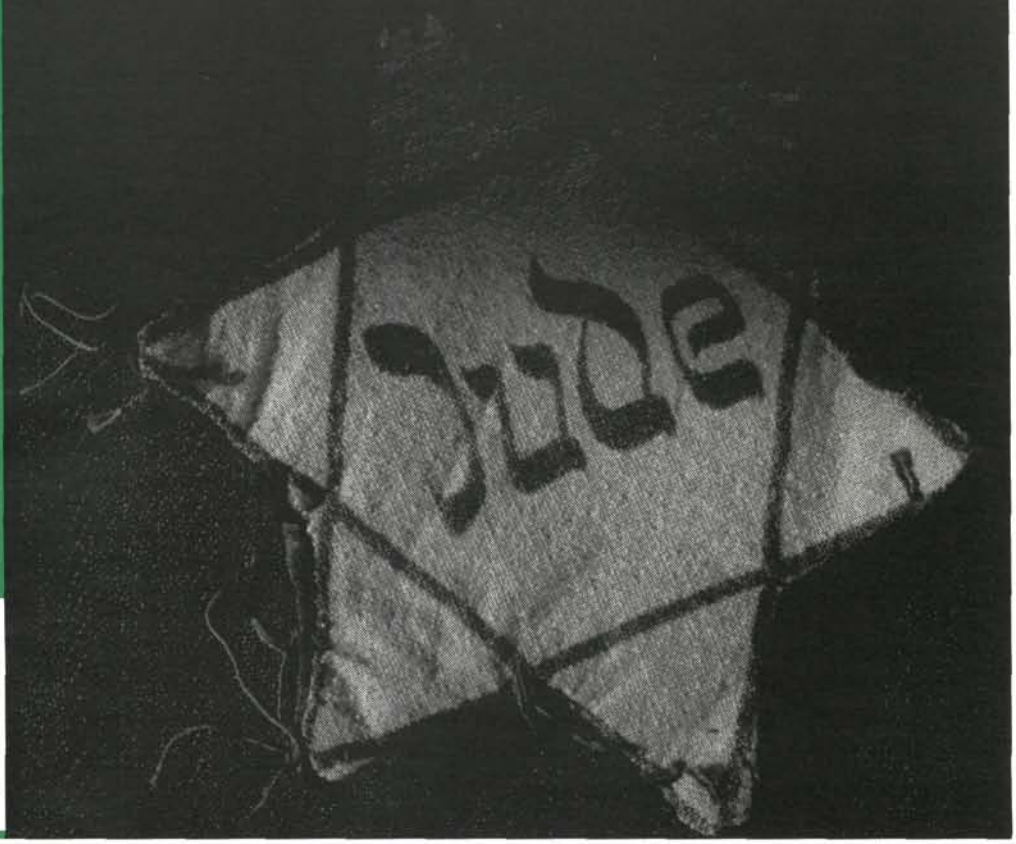
LD WEALES
y
AM
ELSTEIN
ELLA
MAN

# FACING THE HOLOCAUST

**This museum is not a metaphor**
**PAUL GEDIMAN**

**Berlin: 1944**
**PAUL BAUMANN**

**No ordinary museum**
**LIZ LEIBOLD McCLOSKEY**



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# CORRESPONDENCE

## The limits of choice

Falls Church, Va.

*To the Editors:* Liz McCloskey's essay ["Plush Lawns," April 23] certainly hits home, even with the likes of older parents—our kids are now fourteen and ten years of age. She comments that, "So, as much as I am an integral player in nurturing this life within me....after a certain point the outcome of this pregnancy is out of my hands."

I remember a cold winter afternoon in 1981 when my wife and I were huddled with a physician. He was lecturing us on the need for an amniocentesis test, given my wife's "advanced" age of over thirty-five. I squirmed in my chair wondering what to do, when suddenly Judy said, "Well, I don't think we need that, since if there is something wrong with the baby, I'm not going to do anything about it anyway." Ben was born whole and well. I think that my wife and Liz have a lot in common in their common-sense trust. Best of luck to the McCloskeys.

FRANK PARENTE

## Who served & didn't

Monsey, N.Y.

*To the Editors:* Murray Polner's review [April 23] of Christian Appy's *Working-Class War*, while admirable in its spirit, suffers from a crippling sentimentality. True, working-class draftees filled out most of the calls for bodies in our futile Vietnam exercise. But it wasn't simply because sons of the more comfortable classes managed to dodge service....As Polner well knows from his citation of Lawrence Baskir and William Strauss's *Chance and Circumstance*, 25 million men came of draft age during our years of heaviest involvement in Vietnam, but only 4 million served in the military, and of these barely half found their way to Southeast Asia. That leaves 23 million men who never had to fire weapons in anger. So it wasn't only sons of the privileged and the comfortable who avoided services; the ranks of the dodgers were populated at least equally with members of Polner and Appy's embattled working classes.

CHARLES SAYDAH

**Correction:** Because of an editing error, a sentence in Jane Redmont's review of Mary Jo Weaver's *Springs of Water in a Dry Land* [March 12] was garbled. The third paragraph in the second column on page 26 should have read: "Weaver's strongest chapter, titled 'Who is the Goddess and Where Does She Get Us? Neopaganism and Utopian Poetics,' is the most valuable from a scholarly perspective; and helpful in much the same way as *New Catholic Women*."

## Lost opportunity

New York, N.Y.

*To the Editors:* If you are sincere about your intention of searching for common ground with those you disagree with, then perhaps there may be no better place to begin than with your fellow Catholics in Opus Dei. Father Paul Dinter's review [March 12] of Michael Walsh's book, *Opus Dei*, sad to say, represents a lost opportunity.

The review repeats the errors and silly slandermongering of the book, which had a long and painful history as it initially failed to pass legal muster in this country. Openly hostile accounts (even if legally sanitized) go nowhere toward bridging differences in understanding, furthering the truth, or just simply providing accurate information. At least reviews in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* pointed to the author's one-sided research and noted the tendentious nature of his interpretations.

Obviously, something more than books like Michael Walsh's, and simple acquiescence to them, is needed. Opus Dei's radical secular nature, its innovative approach in the apostolate in a free society, its insistence on a legitimate freedom of all Catholics in their temporal activities, and the love for God and neighbor and fidelity to all the church's teachings that ought to inspire Catholics in whatever they undertake, all await serious and objective treatment. Is it too much to hope that *Commonweal* can some day contribute to such a project?

WILLIAM A. SCHMITT

*The writer is communications director for Opus Dei.*

## Ambrose vs. Hobbes

Berkeley, Calif.

*To the Editors:* The theory of just war, as Stephen Pope reminded us ["You Can't Keep a Good Theory Down," February 12], is a stubborn inheritance, invoked by secular authorities even as its ecclesial justification becomes ever more dubious. Professor Pope invites us to pursue a "clear, honest, and constructive moral discourse," and it is in such a spirit that I offer these reflections.

War, for Augustine, was a tragic necessity, the consequence of fallen nature. The "love of enemies" admits "of no exceptions," yet the "kindly harshness" of charity does not "exclude wars of mercy waged by the good." Inspired by the "severity which compassion itself dictates," such wars presumed that those inflicting punishment had "first overcome hate in their hearts." Neither Ambrose nor Augustine permitted killing in self-de-

*(Continued on page 29)*

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COMMONWEAL

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# The blood of Bosnia

As Abigail McCarthy rightly reminds us (p. 11), U.S. intervention abroad should, but sometimes does not, take into account the iron law of unintended consequences, the natural limits of our competence, and the dubious motives sometimes underlying even altruistic gestures. It appears that fear of unintended consequences and the question of effectiveness have prevented the United States and Europe from acting decisively in Bosnia. These are legitimate worries, and it benefits no one, not even the victims of the brutal war in Bosnia, to minimize the possible consequences of contributing to their horrors by introducing more weapons or more troops, even those flying the UN flag. Still, the halfhearted measures that have now emerged as an international response should themselves raise the same specter of unintended consequences.

For all intents and purposes, Bosnian Serb aggression, including the essentially genocidal practice of ethnic cleansing, has succeeded—in part, because the world has stood by and allowed it. Now, faced with Bosnian Serb military and political intransigence, the international community has all but abandoned the effort to negotiate a cease fire and roll back Serbian military gains. The Vance-Owen peace plan, which envisioned the division of Bosnia-Herzegovina into ten semi-autonomous ethnic provinces under UN protection and the return of Serb-occupied Muslim land, appears dead. No Western power or combination of powers is willing to commit the kind of force necessary to reverse the course of Serbian aggression against people and land. Indeed, if things continue as they have, Serbia and Croatia eventually will divide most of Bosnia-Herzegovina between them.

The fate of the Bosnian Muslims now hangs perilously on the maintenance of "safe havens" by UN troops, with critical details of manpower and resources yet to be worked out. U.S. ground forces have been ruled out by President Bill Clinton; Britain, France, and Canada, with troops already there, have not volunteered more; Russia and other UN members seem disinclined to step in. The monetary and material contributions critical to bolster the peacekeeping forces, and to safeguard the refugees and those still living under Serbian siege are badly in arrears—the United States being among the biggest debtors. On all counts, it is hard not to grant the point and share the outraged response of Besim Spahic, the mayor of Zenica, a Muslim-held city: "Please do not talk anymore about civil rights, human rights, and freedom with all this happening in Europe, in the cradle of Western civilization, on the eve of the twenty-first century.... All that is hypocrisy and nonsense."

After several weeks of diplomatic fog, during which Mr. Clinton threatened airstrikes to deter Serbian aggression while lifting the arms embargo against the Muslims, the United States is now following Europe's lead. By most standards, Clinton's handling of this crisis has been indecisive and disappointing. His apparent effort to forge



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a multilateral policy has ended up looking dangerously like U.S. timidity guided by a narrowly construed sense of self-interest. To be sure, Clinton inherited a deteriorating situation. Unquestionably, recourse to effective military and diplomatic measures should have been taken during George Bush's watch. Still, Mr. Clinton never made a serious attempt to explain to the American people why halting the bloodshed in Bosnia was so important, not only to the Bosnians but to those who will fall victim to nationalist and ethnic violence elsewhere. That he did not, leaves the impression that, in the end, he did not think it was important. That is certainly the conclusion drawn by the Bosnian Serbs, whose reactions and statements exhibit that odd combination of relief and scorn for Clinton and the West typical of bullies from the school yard to the battlefield.

We have previously argued that the arms embargo ought to be lifted; by any moral or legal standard—including just-war criteria—the Muslims should be allowed to defend themselves. We continue to hold this view. The international community has decided otherwise. That being so, it becomes the responsibility of that community—the U.S., the Europeans, the Russians, and other UN members—to defend and protect the Muslims. Thus protection of civilians in safe havens is now a moral imperative. The United States, along with other nations, must contribute troops and supplies to the UN peacekeeping forces. Those troops should be used to protect civilian enclaves, patrol the borders between Bosnia and Serbia, and Bosnia and Croatia, and enforce an embargo against the Serbian and Croatian forces in Bosnia.

Though no one imagined that peacekeeping would be easy in the post-cold war world, nearly everyone failed to see how politically complex and morally problematic it would be. We must now face that reality. Peace is not simply the absence of violence. Certainly it is not the silence that falls over a land whose inhabitants have been raped, tortured, murdered, and driven into exile. At the moment, we fear that that is the version of peace about to be accepted by the United States and its allies.

## A GREAT & GOOD MAN

When Cesar Chavez agreed to serve on *Commonweal*'s Sixtieth Anniversary Committee in 1984 it was but another generous act in a lifetime of them. Small of stature, Chavez always stood out, even on an anniversary committee. Unlike the other twenty-five members of the committee, he lacked all worldly credentials (he was not an archbishop, a governor, a university president, a famous writer, or even a college graduate), and his name was distinctly Hispanic. When he died suddenly—and too soon—on April 23, at the age of sixty-six, Chavez was still standing out. He had been in Arizona, making sure farm workers would get at least a portion of their earned and proper recompense.

Despite his gentle appearance and humble beginnings, Chavez was a born, tenacious organizer. He founded the most successful

agricultural workers' union in U.S. labor history, the United Farm Workers Union, a multiracial, rank-and-file outfit that dramatically improved the lot of farm workers—unionized and otherwise—in every region of this country. Though the UFW was/is still far from achieving its goals of humanizing farm labor, the spirit of solidarity among its members is unique in present-day American labor. Predicated on various strata of Catholic social teaching and Gandhian nonviolence, the UFW retains an idealism that is uncommon and a willingness to attempt new ventures. Chavez himself never became a bigwig union leader. It is true that he could be high-handed, and that he offended and too often lost many of his ablest co-workers and allies along the way; but he continued to remain close to the rank and file, to live simply, to prod his union into new endeavors, and to serve as the conscience of labor in general. He not only encouraged the development of a first-rate health-care plan for farm workers and their families, but he fought vigorously to protect farm workers and consumers alike from hazardous and harmful pesticides. His last letter to supporters called for a legal task force to help farm workers file suits against unscrupulous labor contractors.

Chavez was a man of faith as well as of action, and his life and achievements cannot be understood apart from his Catholicism. He merits a special chapter in not only Mexican-American history but in American Catholic history; in a very real sense, he bridged the two.

A fitting tribute to Cesar Chavez was penned by his fellow sixtieth-anniversary committee member, Msgr. George G. Higgins, not long before Chavez's death. In Higgins's recently published autobiography, *Organized Labor and the Church: Reflections of a "Labor Priest"* (with William Bole, Paulist), he writes that "the men and women of the UFW believe that they will eventually reach their goal of recognition by the agriculture industry in the United States. And if or when they do, it will stand as a tribute to the heroic commitment and determination of rank-and-file farm workers, and to the vision of a great and good man, Cesar Chavez." *Viva Cesar Chavez. Viva la Causa.*



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## ET CETERA

**MELLOW MANHATTAN** Just after getting out of a cab at Fifth Avenue and 59th Street, our friend Bob—not yet doddering, not quite spry—felt his elbow and shoulder grabbed from behind. A young woman (17? 19?) thrust three items, rescued from the gutter, into Bob's hand: his date book, his checkbook, his address book. Without them life would not have been tolerable, might not have been possible. He smiled. He gushed. She grinned and walked on. Bob told the story to son Mike, who topped it. Walking on Broadway near 100th Street, his boy Timmy on his shoulders, Mike was stopped by a young man. "Your shoelaces aren't tied, you're going to stumble," said the man. "Here, I'll tie them." And he did.

### AN EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

## EASTER SUNDAY, 1944

ESCAPE TO BERLIN

"In Warsaw, when we walked on the streets, I could make out behind me if there was a German coming or not, or if that was a Polish step," my father-in-law told me. "Ninety-nine percent! You get a sixth sense."

Deported from his native Germany in 1938—the Nazis invalidated his citizenship because his biological father had been Austrian—he lived in and around Warsaw from '38 until 1944. Initially confined to the Jewish ghetto, he and his wife bribed their way out, and, having learned to speak Polish, passed as Poles while living in a small rural community thirty miles outside of the city.

"Nobody knew," he said. "I can't imagine anybody knew. We were able to fool just about everybody.

"The first step was to get out of the ghetto. We had connections outside, we knew people and we did have money. So the problem was to find shelter. The Polish population then was very anti-Semitic. And it was very dangerous to cover up for Jews."

"They used to say," my mother-in-law interjected, "if we find a Jew in your apartment we'll burn your house down."

With determination, money, and plenty of luck they were able to survive. As the war continued and the eventual German defeat and Soviet conquest of Poland became more and more obvious, a different problem presented itself. Could they survive in Poland once the Russians arrived? But what else could they do? Where could hunted Jews go?

"That was the thing!" my father-in-law said excitedly. "What Jew would go back to Germany? You don't go in a lion's den."

But on Easter Sunday in 1944 they did.

"I realized our luck couldn't last forever," my father-in-law said of the prospect of staying on in Poland. "After a certain time, people do run out of luck. Some people start to see something suspicious. The question was how to get out.

"Number one," he went on, "we didn't want to get caught in an uprising. Number two, we did not like the Russians....If we were able to beat the system in Poland for three or four years, we should be able to beat the Germans. But we weren't sure we could beat the Russians. We knew how to handle the Germans....Our chances to survive would be better if we somehow were able to return to Germany and hide for one more year. We had connections. We realized that should Poland come under Russian occupation all the transcripts [identification papers] that we had wouldn't be of much value. We didn't like the Nazis, we didn't like the Russians. That's all."

"We knew plenty of people in Berlin," my mother-in-law added. "There were still some good people in Germany. I must tell you, that most of these people were Catholics. Hitler didn't like the Catholics. Didn't you know that? The Nazis were very antireligious."

But the crucial, life-saving connection in Berlin was a relative by marriage, a Lutheran, who first gave them the necessary identification papers to travel, and then hid them in the attic of his house for the last ten months of the war. He was killed by the Nazis in the very last days of the war.

"He gave me his own military papers and the regular permit to pass the border," my father-in-law said. "They were of particular value because he was 4-F. That was ideal."

They chose the four-day Easter weekend, anticipating a lack of diligence on the part of the German authorities.

"We thought it would be a wonderful time to leave, and it worked out perfect, because they would be in a festive mood."

"There was still some religion," added my mother-in-law. "People liked Easter...[at least] we hoped they would like Easter," she laughed.

"We bought a ticket, first class," he went on. "We were treated very well. It was the regular train from Warsaw to Berlin. Overnight. We were in Berlin in the morning. The Gestapo checked our papers [on the train]. He was very friendly. He liked us, that was the funny thing. He was the only one who checked us. No one suspected."

Once in Berlin, they made their way to the suburb where they were hidden until finally rescued by British forces in 1945.

I asked if in looking back on their decision to return to Berlin, did they think it was particularly ironic that their escape was accomplished on Easter.

"No, no," my father-in-law said. "We only thought, you know, you don't stage an invasion in the middle of a hurricane."

"I know you didn't think about it then, but now in looking back at it?"

"You mean the connection with the Jews coming out of Egypt?"

"Was it Passover?" I asked.

"I wouldn't know," he said quickly. "There was no way [he'd



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have known]....We had other problems....Neither one of us is very religious," he added. "We were not before the war and we certainly didn't become religious after the war....There is a tendency among all people in the world—people are cruel, not just the Germans. The easy thing is for any government in trouble to pick on someone."

Religion, he added, was part of history, that's all. "I don't want to offend you," he said. Not at all, I assured him. He went on. "Jesus was a Jew, right? Jesus' parents, Mary and Joseph, were Jews. So you tell me, where does the Virgin Birth come in? That's where the problem is. To me this is a fairy tale."

My in-laws are reticent when speaking about their experiences during the war, and I do not press them. The conversation above, which I recorded several years ago, was the only time we've talked in any detail about how they survived. I offer it now, in conjunction with Paul Gediman's splendid essay (p.13) on the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, as further reflection on the difficulties of placing these horrors in any kind of moral context. I am sympathetic to Gediman's worries about the inadequacy of "representation" and metaphor and the danger of using the Holocaust "to affirm some transcendent ideal." Yet silence, as Gediman explains, risks a kind of idolatry as well.

Beyond silence there is, I think, the Jewish theologian Franz Rosenzweig's often quoted remark: "The belief [of a Jew] is not the content of a testimony, but rather the product of reproduction. The Jew, engendered by a Jew, attests his belief by continuing to procreate the Jewish people. His belief is not in something: he is himself the belief."

I was brought up in a world where cruelty was confined to battles over toys or games, and where the possibilities of human goodness and evil seemed exhausted by the moral complexities of "The Wide World of Sports" and the "Dick Van Dyke Show." I have little experience of persecution or of suffering, let alone of desperation and killing. And yet it does seem to me a fact, not a metaphor or an idealization, that my wife's parents walked into a lion's den, were thrown into a fiery furnace, and quite unexplainably walked out again. It is also a fact that they were as miraculously preserved from the flames as Daniel, as inexplicably brought back to life from certain death as Lazarus, and as improbably summoned to America, and into my humdrum suburban existence as was Mary summoned by that importuning angel. When I look at my children, I know in a most tangible way what Rosenzweig meant by the persistence of belief. The fact of the existence of these children in this world of "Sesame Street," Cub Scouts, and Bill Clinton, makes the Incarnation and the Massacre of the Holy Innocents more, not less, real. (I can see my father-in-law raising a very skeptical eyebrow at this.) Each and every life is rescued from a tumult of impossibilities, and some lives, mysteriously, are rescued again and again. In some real sense, my very ordinary American children, like their mother, have also been plucked from the oblivion the world once intended for their grandparents. It is not my place to make a religious or transcendent claim about this; there is certainly nothing otherworldly about it. I'm just trying to understand the fact of it. PAUL BAUMANN

REPORT FROM ALBUQUERQUE

## BANG THE DRUM—NOT

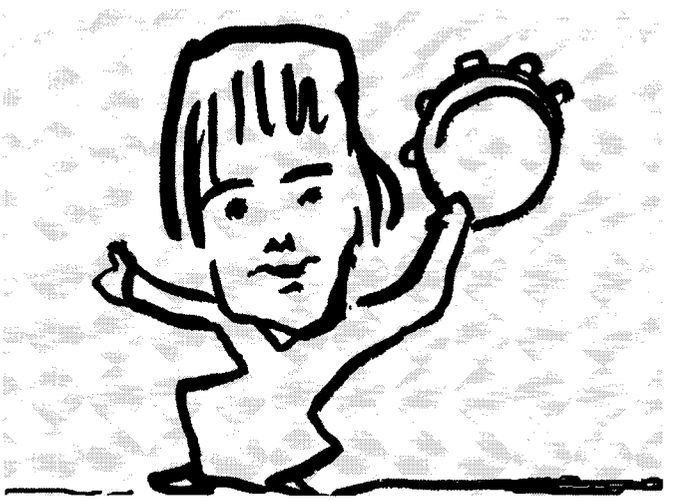
### WOMEN-CHURCH IN THE DESERT

How can women roll back patriarchy and tackle seemingly insurmountable social problems including sexism, racism, violence, and poverty? No less daunting a question was asked by the organizers of "Women-Church: Weavers of Change," a conference held in Albuquerque, New Mexico, April 16-18. Their answer was unity. In an effort to include women of other races and religions, organizers of the event downplayed its Catholic roots, and embraced an agenda promoting the "spirituality of women" and liberal social change. The result was a politically correct and spiritually bland weekend. Even so, it did not avoid controversy.

The majority of the 2,500 participants were Catholic (laywomen and nuns, mostly middle-class and middle-aged), yet there was a marked discomfort with Catholic identity, symbols, and language. When asked for a percentage breakdown of Catholics and non-Catholics in attendance, Sylvia Cancio, a conference planner and Cuban-American from Cincinnati, Ohio, said: "We refuse to use the terms 'Catholic' and 'non-Catholic' in discussing what kind of conference this is. The word 'Catholic' in this context denotes religious imperialism."

In an attempt to appeal to everyone and offend no one, rituals, prayers, and worship services focused on an undefined deity. That deity dwells within women, heals and empowers them. There was little talk about Jesus Christ or loving one's enemies. It seemed that along with the much publicized decision by the organizers not to celebrate a Catholic Mass, a more troubling and perhaps less conscious decision had been made to avoid expressing Christian beliefs.

Women were encouraged, however, to bring drums from home and to learn from the spiritual journeys of those differ-





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ent from themselves. The conference was organized around six "threads"—Native-American, African-American, Asian-American, Hispanic, Euro-American, and lesbian/bisexual—in an attempt "to bring women together across a great deal of diversity," said Adrian Dominican Sister Jamie Phelps, a conference planner and African-American theologian from Chicago. Sister Phelps warned that "charting new waters" of cross-cultural dialogue would not be easy, and she was right.

Minority women were highly visible as keynote speakers and workshop presenters. But as Linda Simunek, a Filipina woman who spoke on education, noted, the sea of white faces in front of her were "different from mine." And it wasn't just the faces. Though Simunek eventually received a standing ovation, her approving words for military women who put their bodies on the line "to free Kuwait" were greeted with a loud murmur of disapproval.

Perhaps the blistering final session, in which minority women excoriated the conference's latent racism, was inevitable. Women of color had been put in the role of teachers by white women who, distancing themselves from much of their own cultural and religious traditions, were looking to fill the void. As theologian Mary Hunt told the *National Catholic Reporter*, many Catholic women were exploring other spiritualities because they believe the church "is bankrupt morally, financially, and theologically."

But a number of minority women grew increasingly uncomfortable with the role the conference had thrust upon them. At a focus session on African-American women and the church, one black woman expressed surprise and discomfort at seeing so many white women present. She wanted to know why no sessions had been planned where women of color could "air our dirty laundry without our white sisters listening in." This complaint and variations on it, expressed throughout the conference by minority women, over the tendency of the dominant culture to expropriate exotic aspects of their spiritualities came to a head during the final session when a Native American told white women carrying drums, "Put them down!"

Women had been invited at the beginning of the conference to participate in the weaving of a large basket set up in the Albuquerque Convention Center. Twigs and grasses, yarn and bright strips of cloth were provided so women could symbolically weave their dreams into the basket's frame; participants could also choose to put personal items, letters, and the names of loved ones on the basket. During the closing ceremony at the nearby Civic Plaza, the basket was symbolically burned as some women danced around it waving orange streamers. The basket was actually burned a week later for the purpose of "releasing the energy of women's dreams into the universe."

This colorful, chaotic basket seemed finally to capture the whimsy of the Women-Church conference. Seemingly anything could go into making the basket; the hopes, dreams, and beliefs of women from many different walks of life could all fit and end in creating something new. But the true value of the basket may have been sentimental only. To weave something that endures—like a Navajo rug—requires faithfulness to a tradition even while expanding it. Women-Church hasn't defined yet what it really believes and thus its long-term impact is still a matter of conjecture. CATHERINE WALSH

*Catherine Walsh is an assistant editor at* St. Anthony Messenger *and a free-lance writer.*

REPORT FROM THE PLANT FLOOR

# SPLITTING SHIFTS

## SPLITTING FAMILIES

The first major union battle to take up the American Catholic bishops' call for "Putting Children and Families First" (*Origins*, November 28, 1991) may be at the A.E. Staley Manufacturing Company in Decatur, Illinois. Decatur is surrounded by miles of corn fields, and the Staley plant processes corn into a variety of chemicals and sweeteners for industry.

The 730 workers at the plant are members of the Amalgamated Industrial Workers, Local 837. Their dispute with management is not about wages, but about being a part of their families and communities. Staley spokesman, J. Patrick Mohan, agrees that the dispute is not about wages. He says it is about competitiveness and corporate consistency.

Danny Wirges, AIW regional director, argues that the company isolated workers from their families when it "radically restructured the work week" in March, shifting it from regular eight-hour shifts to twelve-hour shifts at straight time, three days on and three days off, with a rotation from days to nights every thirty days. Wirges says that means workers do not have the same days off each week. They are always out of sync with their families and the rest of the community. He claims the company also swept away seniority rights, rights which serve to limit managers' favoritism and arbitrariness, and gutted employee rights to union representation to settle grievances.

Staley is a subsidiary of the British conglomerate, Tate & Lyle. Mohan, who is also executive vice-president, says the company merely eliminated "antiquated work rules," which enabled it to replace the old agreement of 160 pages with a "modern agreement" of 17 pages. He says management's offer merely applied the "norm in the continual processing industry"—industrial plants that work around the clock—to the Decatur facility so that it could be "competitive."

Union consultant Ray Rogers, however, says Staley was already competitive, providing Tate & Lyle with one-third of its $400 million profit in 1991. Professor Laurie Clements of the University of Iowa, who has surveyed the union officers at other corn wet-milling plants in the United States, says the Staley offer was anything but the norm. "They were horrified," he says. "It is a major, major step backward for workers in the industry." The new work schedule, in particular, was one of the worst aspects of the Staley offer.

But Mohan says the schedule is not a problem because man-



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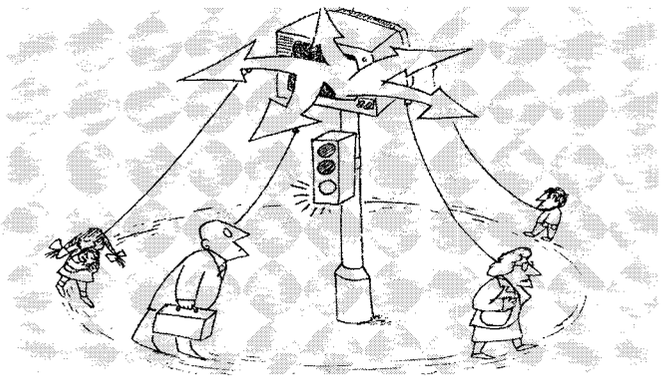

agement gave each worker a personal schedule for a full year: "I know one guy who carries his schedule around in his pocket so he knows when he's off," he says.

That's not how Henry Kramer, a worker with over twenty years' seniority, sees it. His schedule is a problem: "When I'm working, I can see my kids one hour a day. My boy plays basketball. I can't see any of his games. My daughter is on the drill team. I can't see her perform. She's a senior this year, and I have to work on her graduation night." Kramer adds that having three days off in a row "is not worth it. On the first day, I sleep until 4 P.M. When I get up, I'm a zombie and I don't have much patience with the kids. On the second day I'm all right, but on the third day, I have to get my schedule into swing with work. So I really only have one day with my family." The worst stress, Kramer finds, is with his children. He says they are getting professional counseling to try to cope with the stress the new work schedule places on the family.

Denton Larimore also pans the six-day week. "There's no consistency to my days off," he complains. "I can't have a consistent part in my family's life." Larimore coached Little League, but his new workweek forced him to stop. "I can't be involved in church activities, scouting, or even bowling league. I can't be involved in anything outside of work," he says. "It's like we're tools the company uses and then stores in a toolbox when it doesn't need us."

Bill and Nancy Hanna are married and both work at Staley. Their children are grown, but the Hannas say management still found a way to interfere with their family life—it separated the couple and forced them onto different shifts so that they do not share the same days off. The Hannas say every other married couple they know of at Staley likewise was separated by management.

Mohan denies there is a policy to separate married couples. He acknowledges that management knows who are married couples, but he blames the union for these scheduling problems because it refused to help the company implement its final offer. He says that twelve-hour shifts are actually better for workers: they increase leisure time because workers "only work one-half the days of the year."

Professor Clements, however, notes that Staley's twelve-hour shifts actually decrease leisure time because employees work a hundred hours a year more than they did with a five-day, forty-hour week. "Historically, companies used overtime as a way of cutting the costs of employing more people," he says. "This is an alternative way of doing that."

On April 4, officials of seven unions representing Tate & Lyle workers in the United States and Canada met for the first time. Their meeting indicated that there would be further resistance to management's would-be norms. Workers from a Brooklyn, New York, plant told of a failed strike against a contract similar to the one Staley wants in Decatur. Joe Dwyer, a Teamster leader from Tate & Lyle's Western Sugar plant in Billings, Montana, and president of the ad-hoc council, announced that the various unions supported the AIW's fight in Decatur. Leaders of Tate & Lyle's Australian unions telegraphed a message of solidarity, while union leaders from a Tate & Lyle plant in Silvertown, England, spoke by telephone to the meeting and explained their struggle against a proposal virtually identical to the one in Decatur.

For the time being, workers at the Decatur plant are doing only what they are told by the company. AIW Local 837 President Dave Watts says "management wants to run the plant their way, so we're letting them do it." As a result, "production has suffered." Mohan acknowledges that production has dropped by almost one-third. With the AIW calling for a boycott of Tate & Lyle's Domino, GW, and Redpath sugars, their sales may show a drop as well. For some families trying to adjust to the new work rules, that would seem like the company was getting its just deserts. PETER DOWNS

*Peter Downs is a free-lance writer who reports frequently from the Midwest on labor topics.*

REPORT FROM ENGLAND

## MIGRATING ANGLO-CATHOLICS

### A TANGLED PAST & FUTURE

The Reverend John Broadhurst's question hangs in the air like the smoke from his cigar. "What," he asks, "is the point at which an individual cannot walk down the same road in fellowship with another?" He leans his head back, takes a thoughtful drag. "At what point does a difference become a division?"

A leader of the Anglo-Catholic opposition to female priests in the Church of England, Broadhurst is responsible for pondering such fundamental queries. The church's ruling body, the General Synod, shocked Anglican conservatives on November 11, 1992, by voting in favor of female priests, jerking tears of joy from one side of the debate, tears of grief from the other. Though no women will be ordained until the legislation passes several parliamentary and synodical hurdles, the historic vote has forced the Anglo-Catholic contingent to outwardly organize, inwardly re-evaluate its place in a remarkably diverse church.

The dilemma facing Anglo-Catholics, whether to remain in



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the Church of England or to find a place in the Roman fold, was clarified on April 23 when Cardinal Basil Hume, archbishop of Westminster, announced the Catholic church's acceptance of unhappy Anglicans. The long-awaited invitation was offered with the stipulation that defecting clergy be reordained, and on the condition of an "individual yes" from every convert and "eventual total integration." Though the specific meaning of those words has not yet been determined, the historical implications of the announcement could not be denied. One reporter asked the cardinal if his statement marked the end of the over four-hundred-year-old schism between the two churches. Hume took a deep breath and said, "Could be."

The irony of the controversy is that disagreements over fundamental issues have existed in the Church of England for years. Indeed, many Anglicans feel the richness of their church lies in that it can accommodate hand-clapping Evangelicals, quiet middle-of-the-road Protestants, and Latin-chanting Catholics. But traditionalists have heralded the vote as an intolerable usurpation of doctrinal authority belonging only to the Catholic church. "Maybe we've lived in a cloud-cuckoo-land with Anglicanism," admits the Reverend Christopher Bedford, vicar of Saint Matthew's, an Anglo-Catholic church in London. "But never until the eleventh of November was it actually said that we would do something that actually contradicts [the Catholic tradition]."

The cardinal's announcement left much to be resolved. With entire parishes clamoring to secede from the Church of England, questions of group arrangements with the Catholic church and building custody have yet to be answered. How many Anglicans decide to cross lines will depend partly on whether or not the House of Bishops, when it convenes later this month, can agree upon some sort of alternative episcopal structure to appease traditionalists. Estimates vary, but the Catholic church in England guesses that up to three hundred clergy may convert and only time will tell how many lay people will follow. While a commission made of both Catholic and Anglican bishops will be hammering out the specifics of an agreement behind closed doors over the next few months, individual Christians are struggling to discern where they should worship each Sunday.

Saint Mary's is home to over one hundred Christians. Home of the highest Anglican rite in London and a well-to-do congregation, the ornate church draws worshipers from all over town. They come to celebrate Mass properly, brilliantly, with clouds of incense and a paid choir. Rodrick Gradidge, a die-hard Saint Mary's enthusiast, compares his church of forty-some years to a club, a place in which people may be themselves. Sipping his pint in a nearby pub after Mass, he explains that he will not leave the church, as he mistrusts the Vatican as a guardian of truth as much as he now mistrusts the synod. Dressed in a kilt, his grey hair in a braid, Gradidge exemplifies the sort of eccentricity characteristic of Saint Mary's. Indeed, the prospect of conforming to papal infallibility, to a universal authority, presents an ironic identity crisis for the Anglo-Catholic who has, for so many years, thrived on the extreme edge of the Church of England. Nevertheless, a future in a church which allows women priests is unsettling for Gradidge. "We can still say we are members of the Church of England *and* of Saint Mary's, and I pray to God we can always say that—but I don't know how it can happen," he says.

While Saint Mary's will lose a substantial fraction of the congregation, and maybe even its clergy, to the Catholic church, most will stay. There is an emotional aversion to the Catholic church for many upper-class Anglicans. Elizabeth Mills, who sits in the front-row pew at Saint Mary's every Sunday, says, "There's something rather dubious and lower-middle class about being nonconformist." The Church of England, throughout Mills's childhood, was always associated with affairs of state and society: "brownie" service, morning matins, the military medals her father wore to church. It was a singularly English experience that was very much attached to a specific building. The Irish Catholics, on the other hand, have historically been victims of discrimination in English society. They were outsiders and poor and worshiped in tin huts, she explains. Prejudice against Catholics, Mills says, "is deeply entrenched within the British psyche."

Such aversion to Catholicism is not to be found at Saint Matthew's, a parish surrounded by public housing developments in a poor, east London area. The vicar, Bedford, has written a letter to the Anglican bishop of London that asks for permission to move Saint Matthew's and all its assets to the Catholic church. The parishioners anticipate liberation. The Catholic church, they feel, will offer them a new spiritual home. This enthusiasm is fueled by the unwavering papalism of the clergy. "There can only be one captain of the church and in the end that's the pope," says Bedford. "The General Synod and [Archbishop of Canterbury] George Carey I have no time for whatsoever." Not long ago that would have been a fairly outrageous statement for an Anglican vicar to make. But the November 11 vote has, for the more ardent traditionalists, eliminated the need for the pretense of compatibility. At Saint Matthew's and similar churches, union with the Catholic church is no longer the guiding light in the far-off future; it is an immediacy.

The official Anglo-Catholic complaint about the November 11 vote is that the Church of England, as a branch of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church (and not an autonomous, Protestant sect), hasn't the authority to make critical doctrinal decisions such as who may enjoy the privilege of celebrating the Eucharist. Says Michael Barwick of Saint Matthew's, "I passionately believe the Church of England may not decide on its own." He struggles to pinpoint the passion. Touching on a thread common to all strands of the Anglo-Catholic opposition, he laments the increasing influence of secular liberalism in British Christianity. "It's the truth that's important and you can't vote the truth away," he says. "It [liberal theology] is such a mess it ceases to be anything you can have confidence in being true."

While the traditionalists condemn this breach of Catholic tradition all over the *London Times*'s editorial pages, a less public mistrust of progressive ideology quietly drives the opposition forward. For many Anglo-Catholics, women priests are another manifestation of the potent liberalism imported from America that, once inside the church house doors, will only wreak more



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havoc on a timeless perfection. "We should be waiting for the dust of feminism to fall," says the Reverend Bill Scott, vicar of Saint Mary's. "It's very much living in a fog, as it were, and when one lives in a fog one tries to be as careful as one can until the fog lifts."

At no point in recent history has the Church of England been in such a fog as this. As most Anglo-Catholics will argue, today's controversy is about a great deal more than whether or not women should say Mass. It is about the fact that less than 3 percent of the English population darkens Anglican church doors on Sundays. It is about the escalation of crime and homelessness in Britain, and about the senseless murders, the sort formerly only heard of in American cities, that are being committed in London neighborhoods. While newspaper pundits complain of the corruption of British youth and the increasingly secular nation crawls wounded out of the recession, a divided Church of England is being forced to examine how it can maintain and, in many places, regain, its position as England's moral center.

PAUL JASKUNAS

*Paul Jaskunas is a student at Oberlin College. He has been following the debate in the Church of England while studying in London this spring.*

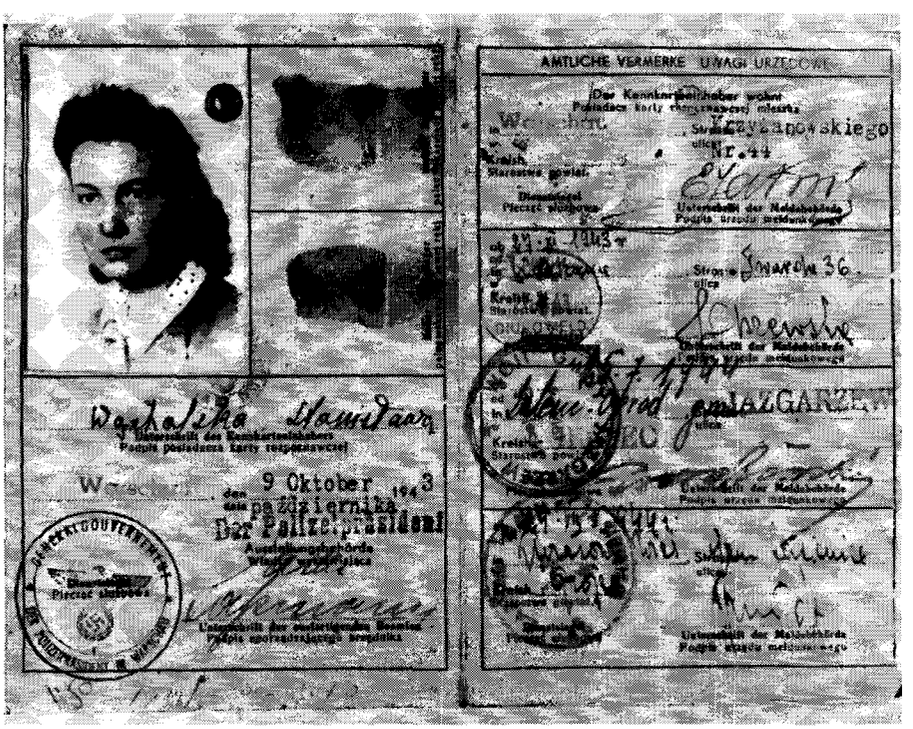
**OF SEVERAL MINDS** Liz Leibold McCloskey

# NO ORDINARY MUSEUM

## A PLACE TO TAKE OFF ONE'S SHOES

Irmgard Rosenberg was twenty-six years old when her brother Heinz was taken to the Treblinka extermination camp. It was the fall of 1943. The Minsk ghetto in the USSR, where Irmgard had been deported with her family, was liquidated soon after. Irmgard and her family were never heard from again. I simply cannot imagine being in her shoes.

But it was Irmgard's identity card I carried as I walked through the United States Memorial Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C., during its opening week. Some critics, I know, regard the use of such cards as a condescending gimmick. It was helpful to me. All I know about Irmgard is what was printed on the card given to me as I entered the museum, yet it is more than I knew about the hundreds, thousands, of other faces I saw there. Each screen displayed powerful footage. Each glass case documented important information. Every face cried out for recognition but so many simply flashed onto one of the many screens and then disappeared. I couldn't absorb it all; it was totally overwhelming. The sense of seeing only fragments of the horrible madness of the Holocaust made its sheer magnitude that much more real.




So I tried to hold onto just a few faces—usually the faces of children. There was a film clip of a mother and her son, a toddler, who was rocking slowly back and forth on a bed. He looked so quiet and still and vacant. And then in a film of still photos of some of the children orphaned by the Holocaust, on a screen in a narrow hallway with about ten or twenty different films running, there was a little orphaned boy holding a pair of grown-up shoes and laughing. Maybe they had been his father's shoes. How much people try to hold onto what was theirs. Not only the big things like their faith (which Elie Wiesel said was consumed by the flames at Auschwitz) and their belief in humanity (which Anne Frank wrote that she still maintained, despite all that had happened) and their hope (which the Nazis did everything within their power to destroy) and each other (which became impossible), but they held onto their belongings: their toothbrushes, mirrors, umbrellas, and their shoes. The pile of toothbrushes was among the most troubling displays; people earnestly, desperately wanted to hold onto their "articles of daily living." Their attempt to maintain hope saw them packing their bags and bringing them on the freight cars. At the museum there was a huge pile of shoes—little children's shoes,



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workboots, women's pumps, shoes that made your feet ache terribly after an entire day of uselessly carrying heavy stones up a hill, shoes that marched you to your death, shoes that may have once grounded you and supported you which had become nothing but a curse. Irmgard, I cannot imagine being in your shoes.

In his remarks at the dedication ceremony for the Holocaust museum, Elie Wiesel said that the museum does not provide any answers. It is a question mark. Reluctant to proclaim any universal meaning or lesson to be gleaned from the tragedy of the Holocaust, Wiesel said that at least we must learn not to remain indifferent when people suffer. Perhaps the place to start, as Moses did, is to take off our shoes. In his speech at the museum dedication, President Bill Clinton cited the passage from Exodus (3:4-5). God called out to Moses and, albeit with some hesitation, Moses said "Here I am." And then God said, "Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place on which you stand is holy ground." □

**OF SEVERAL MINDS** Abigail McCarthy

# AMERICANS ABROAD

## WHEN GOOD INTENTIONS GO AWRY

I think every columnist must share the "Isn't-this-where-I-came in?" syndrome. As the years pass some topics resurface again and again in slightly different guise. Just now experts and pundits on the talk shows and the op-ed pages are taking second looks at American foreign policy initiatives.

Do the unintended consequences of our efforts to "help" suggest that we should not have helped at all? Was the problem solving itself in Somalia without our help anyway? If we had acted more decisively a year-and-a-half ago, would we have deterred the Serbs? Did our intervention in Iraq do more harm than good?

It is almost twenty years since I pondered problems like these in a *Commonweal* column and I think what I wrote then has relevance today:

"How will we ever sort it out? We have so often done harm by doing what we thought was good. At every international conference we face bitter accusations from third-world delegates...."

Also present are Americans darkly suspicious of all our efforts at aid in the past—disposed to see in them only disguises for "economic imperialism." Since all human effort is mixed in motive, there is truth in the allegation. But it is equally true that Americans saw good in our efforts. We are almost incurably missionary in spirit, no matter how suspect the word missionary today. Why have our efforts gone so "aft agley"?

The sub-Sahara is one current and very painful example. Climatologists tell us that the conditions there did not result from a climate shift alone (they are in dispute about whether there is indeed a climate shift). We of the developed nations sank deeper wells and taught the agricultural arts to the nomadic people of the region. A rise in population and new food dependence patterns followed. It is at least arguable that a sparse nomadic population would have adapted to the long drought and had a much higher rate of survival.

*"Secretly trained by Americans? That's funny, so were we."*

The whole problem of world hunger has been compounded by our pattern of aid. In the past most Americans thought that we were sending food abroad at some sacrifice, and the majority of them approved. In addition, millions of Americans gave to church- and charity-sponsored food assistance programs. Now we have come to the decidedly uncomfortable knowledge that we were disposing of our surpluses and helping our own economy in the process. And doing long-range harm:

"Over the years developing nations became extremely dependent on food assistance. Between 1954 and 1969," Dan Morgan reported in the *Washington Post*, "free food or commodities received on easy credit terms accounted for more than 30 percent of total food imports of developing countries." We cannot shift abruptly to technical assistance now.

Political aid is even more questionable. Take only one example. The tragedy in Chile (including the assassination of Allende and the ensuing years of murderous oppression under Pinochet) shows how very complex the problem can become, no matter how needed or well-intentioned our intrusion into the affairs of another seemed at any given point. Granted, our first presence in Chile was that of American business exploiting and developing the copper mines. (And, as always in Latin America, doing so in cooperation with the local economic elite.) But Chile was a country of sound democratic institutions and our interdependence grew in many ways. So it was that our first anti-Allende effort took a form that might seem acceptable to many Americans even today.

It was an avowed purpose of the Alliance for Progress that the United States should cooperate with every effort for democracy and independence in Latin America. Advisers to the administration in the early 1960s thought they saw in the rise of the Christian Democratic party a third force between the repressive and the exploitation on one hand, and the Communists on the other. In Chile this was shaping up as a three-way struggle among Eduardo Frei



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or Radomiro Tomic of the Christian Democrats and Salvador Allende.

The events can be summarized quickly: Observers at the world conference of Christian Democrats in Santiago were asked to meet with Frei and Tomic (who was to oppose Allende in a later election after serving as ambassador to the United States). Then it was arranged for Frei and the leading Christian Democrat of South America, Rafael Caldera of Venezuela, to come to Washington as speakers at a conference arranged just for that purpose. At the same time, meetings were set up with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, interested journalists, and finally, very quietly, with the president himself. Thereafter, very substantial help was poured into Frei's campaign—possibly through the channels of the CIA and international labor. Frei won, Allende lost.

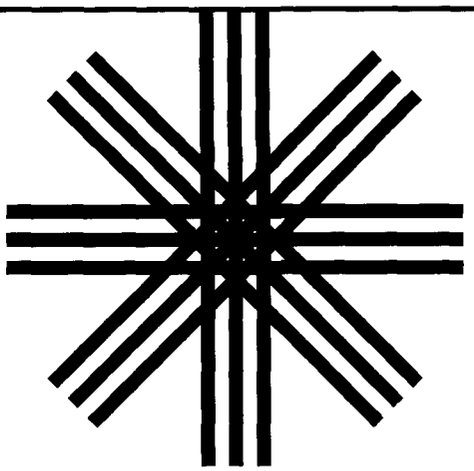
Certainly, one can hazard the thought that it might have been better to let events take their course. Suppose Allende had won. He was a Chilean of the Chileans. The Chileans had a right to choose him. Things might have developed very differently in his administration at that time; polarization was not as extreme; Castroism and terrorism were not so strong on the continent; the opposition was not as intense. He might not have been pushed to the choices he made in his own administration later. This is mere speculation, but legitimate to consider.

A sadder thought is this: Eduardo Frei might very well have won on his own (that was his own conviction). Frei, succeeded by Tomic, who was more committed to radical change and more a man of the workers, might have managed a pace of change which would have satisfied the most desperate. As it was, both were made vulnerable to the charge of being tools of the Colossus to the North.

Yet the dilemma is real. Should we have refrained from helping Frei, from insuring his success? Powerful international forces were helping his opponents of the Right and Left. With the bitter wisdom of hindsight Frei came to the conclusion that we should have refrained.

We are left to ask: How can we exercise our moral obligations to our neighbors of the globe whose future is interwoven with ours, and still not intrude in such a way that natural and historical process is wrenched askew? Surely not by turning our backs or shirking responsibility.

Almost twenty years and the problems with material aid and political intervention persist. Worse, our military aid and military interventions in the intervening years have escalated the patterns of international violence. Think of Grenada, Panama, Libya and, finally Iraq where the problems we sought to end go on in convoluted fashion. The most horrible example, of course, is that of our cooperation with the murderous government forces in El Salvador—confirmed by the recent UN report. Such surely are the considerations of a Vietnam-educated administration as it faces the terror in Bosnia, the human rights violations in countries important to us—China, Turkey, Mexico, among others—and starvation in Sudan. □

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The Friars of Atonement announce the fourth annual Graymoor Prize, to be awarded to the best essay on any aspect of ecumenical or interreligious affairs. Our previous winners have reported from England, Wales, Jerusalem, Eisenach, Germany, and Chicago, among other places. From the euphonious Anthea Dove (1993) to the exotic Ty Mam Duw Community (1992) to the formidable Ed Marciniak (1991), Graymoor winners have written about the difficulties as well as the satisfactions, the personal as well as the theological dimensions of ecumenical work. The prize is intended to encourage and support new ecumenical and interreligious ideas and perspectives. The award-winning submission, which may take the form of a scholarly or critical essay or a personal narrative, should appeal to the interests of the general educated reader.

Original and unpublished essays of approximately 2,500-4,000 words should be submitted to the editors of COMMONWEAL who will make the final decision following consultation with a panel of experts. The winning essay will receive $1,000 and will be published in COMMONWEAL. The editors reserve the right to select more than one winner or not to award the prize at all.

Deadline: October 1, 1993. Announcement of Prize: December 17, 1993. The prize-winning essay will be published in COMMONWEAL's January 14, 1994, issue. This essay will become the property of the Graymoor Ecumenical Institute. All other essays will be returned to their authors after January 1.

**COMMONWEAL** 15 Dutch Street, New York, NY 10038




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# THIS MUSEUM IS NOT A METAPHOR

## CONFRONTING THE HARD FACTS OF THE HOLOCAUST

PAUL GEDIMAN

"That's where I was. Mauthausen. I remember those stones."

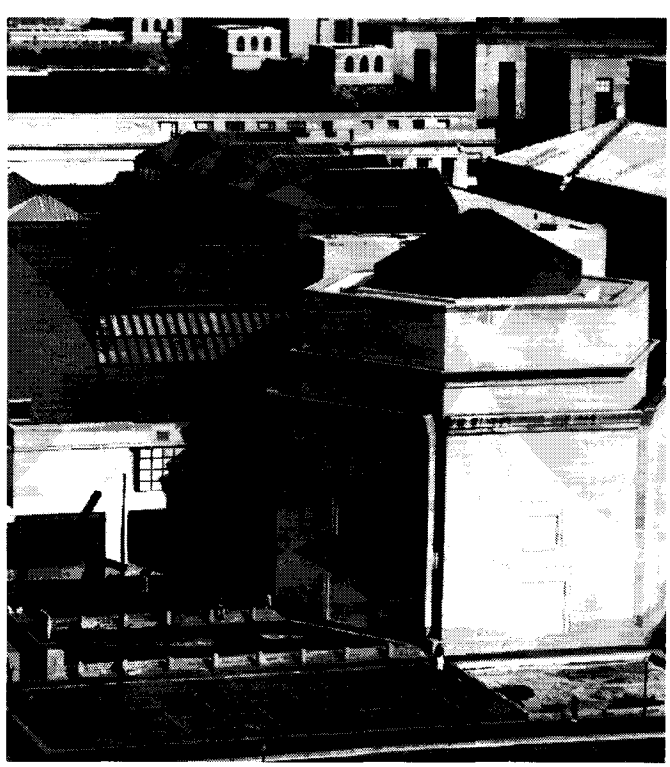
It was when I overheard a woman who looked to be in her early seventies speak these words that I realized that most of my objections to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., had long since evaporated. We stood before a pile of stones taken from the quarry of the Mauthausen concentration camp. Ostensibly, the woman was speaking to a boy, presumably her grandson, who stood beside her. But her voice wasn't conversational. It wasn't pedagogic either. There was, instead, wonder in her voice, an inflection of stunned surprise. She was talking to herself. I wondered if it were possible that she had only then remembered where she had been. I decided not. More likely, she was saying something which, every time it is uttered, must be spoken as if for the first time.

Before I entered the museum, my skepticisms were many and tangled. Some objections arose because I am an American and value being so. Some derived from the fact that I am a Jew and value that too. Still others were aesthetic and epistemological, tied both to what I knew about the museum's design and, more fundamentally, to an anxiety about the power of representation to convey things too neatly and its attendant impotence to penetrate to a complete truth about anything.

Any memorial or museum, no matter how brilliantly conceived, is an act of taxonomy and taxidermy. Memorials classify and preserve meaning. All speech, and language itself, can be said to do this, but a memorial is a singularly collective enterprise. A memorial doesn't so much tell a story as assert the meaning of one. Memorials are erected usually only after a society has arrived at a consensus concerning the meaning of the event or person it has chosen to remember. But what is the meaning of the Holocaust? To answer the question is absurd. How can it be represented? Many assert that it can't. Though understandable, this response is unacceptable, for soon all the survivors will be gone and knowledge of the Holocaust will have to pass from living to crafted memory.

Of all the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum's strategies, its artifice of empathy is the most problematic. You are urged to take an identity card of "a real person who lived during the Holocaust," a person who, if you followed the instructions properly, is the same gender and roughly the same age as yourself. At three stations in the exhibit, you punch your card into a machine in order to find out what happened to your surrogate by 1939, by 1944, and, in the end, whether or not your shadow survived. The intention of this device is transparent: to cut through the numbing anonymity of 6 million. But this reduction of a life to three paragraphs and a bar code is only a more intimate form of dehumanization.

The ID cards, together with other aspects of the museum, elicit a wariness about entering a Holocaust theme park. The



PAUL GEDIMAN, *a writer, lives in New York City. He is working on a novel.*



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layout of the permanent exhibition is an exercise in plotted misdirection, a deliberate echo of the disorientation of victims who were herded from homes to ghettos to death camps (e.g., a replica of a Polish border post forces an abrupt ninety-degree turn). Michael Berenbaum, the museum's project director, says: "The geographical motif of design is that whenever you think you know where you're going, you end up somewhere else." Objects meant to evoke the time are thrust in your way: the striped prisoner uniforms; a casting of the infamous sign, *Arbeit Macht Frei* [Work Makes You Free], from the entrance to Auschwitz; cobblestones from the Warsaw Ghetto; a freight car used to transport people to the camps; railroad tracks from Treblinka.

Knowing of these things before entering the museum, I worried that the cumulative effect would be to go over thought's head to the viscera. There is a danger in placing too great a premium on feeling, especially regarding the Holocaust, in the face of which it is all too easy to forget that the intellect as well as the gut is obliged to respond. If the museum catered too readily and simply to the senses, and above all to the eye, it risked moral laziness. After fifty years, the black and white images of the camps familiar from newsreels have become ciphers. Distilled meaning without narrative, they comprise a frozen iconography of starvation and barbed wire that says nothing about the people who died except that they are dead, about those who killed them except that they killed, or about how such a thing came to occur except that it did. The images have become symbols of an abstraction called evil, an abstraction torn from the fact that the attempted extermination of European Jewry occurred in a particular time and place, and with a multitude of arguable historical causes. While these images are capable of producing a sense of cathartic revulsion that causes real anguish, they can also feed our moral vanity. Judgment being a function of comparison, each of us is reassured to be outraged by the outrageous, disgusted by the disgusting. The museum would be an abject failure if, when confronted by the iconography of evil, people were made merely to feel "good" by contrast.

There is just enough history in the exhibit to evade this trap. Historical specificity is offered in the sequential account of Hitler's ascent to power and the evolution of the policy of genocide. It provides historicity without the hubris of drawing a too neat and untenable line of cause and effect to the piles of corpses. And, too, the sheer physicality of the collected objects—fragments of Torah scrolls, scissors, prayer shawls, cutlery—inoculates against abstraction. The stones from the Mauthausen quarry are heaped in front of blown-up photographs of the camp, so that the pictures you may be familiar with remain in the background, while the objects extend toward you, requiring a new response. Seeing the striped uniforms hanging from a steel rack, you notice that they are blue and gray and you realize (and feel an idiot for *having* to realize) that all of this happened in *color*. The black and white images you know are almost background noise to the three-dimensional relics and replicas whose effect, in the end and properly, is simply to make you look again at what you thought you knew. The eye is a goad to thinking, after all.

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The most devastating lesson in the power of the eye is a three-story tower filled with more than a thousand photographs, taken before the war, of Jews from the Polish town of Ejszyszki. There are sisters at the beach, graduation photos, pictures of the orthodox and of the assimilated, portraits of men preening in the uniforms of the countries for which they had fought in the First World War. They are pictures of life. In the *New Republic*, Leon Wieseltier wrote of this installation: "That is what is missing from so many accounts of the end of Jewish life in Europe: the eros of Jewish life in Europe before the end." Some of the photographs you can see clearly and touch. But as they rise to the top of the tower, they elude your ability to touch and see. The exhibit lets you know more than you knew a moment ago, but among the things it lets you know is that you can't begin to know all of these people. It also renders you a bystander, because you know what will happen to them and they don't, and there is nothing you can do about it. Text informs you that Jews had lived in the town for 900 years, and that it took the Nazis two days to make Ejszyszki *judenfrei*. This, much more effectively than three paragraphs and a bar code, evokes the human weight of what was lost.

Perhaps the best measure of the museum's success is that it refutes the response that the Holocaust was inhuman, and in so doing resists the temptations of moral vanity. Near the end of the permanent exhibition there is a video of a British officer addressing some Germans who worked at Bergen-Belsen. Men and women stand in line, listening to their chastisement. One woman, with her head bowed and her hands clasped submissively in front of her, appears to be sniffling. She looks like a little girl receiving a reprimand from a grade-school principal, and in this incommensurate response it is impossible not to see that the Holocaust was absurdly, uniquely, precisely human.

The principal (though by no means the only) victims were, of course, precisely Jewish. As a Jew, the last thing I wanted from an American museum of the Holocaust was a reduction of the event to an object lesson about human intolerance. Against this prospect, it is appropriate to launch jeremiads: Don't, America, appropriate something that is not yours for your sunny drama of redemption and the comfort it may offer to your sense of national virtue. The dead did not die for the moral edification of Americans. They did not die for anything. So, to be blunt, don't nail them to a figurative cross and scavenge their memory for scraps of transcendence. They are not a sacrifice.



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As Jonathan Rosen, executive editor of the *Forward*, a Jewish weekly, wrote on the *New York Times* op-ed page: "The murder of 6 million Jews is not a metaphor for human suffering. It is not a metaphor for anything, and the more it becomes one, the more it is removed from the time and place necessary to any true telling of historical events, the less it will be anything at all."

Rosen is right. The Holocaust is not a metaphor. But to stop there begs the question of how we are to grapple with it now. Just because all thought about—and representation of—the Holocaust is ultimately incomplete, it does not follow that the attempt to think about it and represent it is unnecessary. A distinction must be made between using the Holocaust as an instrumental metaphor to affirm some transcendent ideal and using metaphor as an instrument to speak and think about the Holocaust. The former is offensive to memory and to historical veracity. The latter is necessary, because not to represent the Holocaust, to surround a historical event with the prohibitions of idolatry, is to succumb to a reverential horror that verges on viewing the Holocaust as somehow sacred. Properly then, the museum affirms the profanity of the Holocaust—profanity in the sense that there was absolutely nothing otherworldly about it. There is a room in the museum with 4,000 pairs of shoes. Before the mock entrance to Auschwitz, in a display of objects taken from prisoners, there is a rusting prosthetic leg. These objects point metaphorically to a historical event, not constrictingly to any meaning of history. If the Holocaust must be incorporated into any eschatological narrative, that is a job best left to synagogues and churches, or to individuals, but not to a state-sanctioned act of institutional memory. To its credit, the museum tries, figuratively and literally, to leave open a space where the mind and the moral imagination can try to fulfill their obligations.

After you leave the museum, you can enter a hexagonal room called the Hall of Remembrance. You can sit on the hard stone steps and, surrounded by whiteness and filled with what you have just seen, will likely feel compelled to be silent. This room, which is the official memorial, constitutes, when taken with the museum, an elegant incorporation of the twinned demands of speech and silence. Eventually, however, the silence and whiteness have to be filled. Ultimately, metaphor being all we have to work with, speech and representation are as necessary as they are incomplete.

Speaking at the dedication ceremony, President Bill Clinton said: "Here on the town square of our national life—we dedicate the United States Holocaust Museum and so bind one of the darkest lessons of history to the hopeful soul of America."

The Jeffersonian rhetoric of tolerance tells us less about why the museum belongs in the capital than do the Puritans, who brought with them the Geneva Bible, whose frontpiece engraving depicted the Exodus. This part of their story accords with the idea of America as the world's refuge from persecution. Those pilgrims, however, did not find a promised land or build a city on a hill, for in the end the new world was not at all new. Fleeing Europe did not cleanse them of Europe, and those who followed brought with them a burdensome cultural inheritance. As the flagship state of Western civilization, the United States bears more than a cousinly resemblance to nineteenth-century Germany, the most scientifically advanced and culturally influential nation of its day. The fallacy of moral equivalence is not necessary in order to see that, broadly speaking, the two cultures go about the business of learning and knowing and thinking in much the same way. The point is not that a Holocaust could happen here. Our moral destiny is not manifest. The point is that the Holocaust is unique to the extent that the murder of European Jewry could not have been carried out in the manner it was without what are commonly accepted as the achievements of Western civilization. Rational, orderly, characterized by great industrial ingenuity, abetted by propaganda disseminated by the newest machinery of the early communications revolution, the Holocaust was a product of a civilization confident in its ability to manipulate the world.

Visitors to the new museum already aware of the Holocaust should find themselves feeling what I read into the voice of that woman who had survived Mauthausen: the need to confront it as if for the first time. As for those who know little or nothing about it, it is to be hoped that on their way from the aerospace museum to the Washington Monument they will enter the new museum. Maybe, after marveling at replicas of Apollo spacecraft, a handful will remember by whom the pioneers of rocket propulsion were employed. Perhaps, after enjoying all the celebrations of our culture's mastery over nature and history, a few will be brought back to a truth about human nature and history, and be duly reminded of what exists, double-helixed with all our nobility of achievement, at the very core of what we are. □



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# A MARRIAGE OF CONNIVANCE

## 'THIS BOY'S LIFE'

*A true story*. Whenever those words appear in a movie's ad or in its opening credits, they function as both appeal and defiance. Appeal: the events and characters you are about to see are as real as you are. Therefore they should concern you. Defiance: as incredible as the following story may seem, it did happen. We swear it. Truth is stranger than fiction.

And *This Boy's Life* is indeed "a true story," just as its opening credits state. Or, at least, it's based on a memoir by one of our most brilliant fiction writers, Tobias Wolff, and he certainly makes the events of his remembered childhood ring about what happened when his divorced mother, fearing that the improvised, roaming existence she was leading with her son was turning him delinquent, married a man of unquenchable meanness and occasional brutality. The memoir's multifariousness is part of the book's truth. We read about young Tobias (or Jack, as he likes to be called) in his solitude and in the company of kids and adults. We are privy to his dreams of adventure, his lust for older girls, his petty thievery, his attempts to understand his much-loved but slightly dotty mother and to cope with his obnoxious yet pathetic stepfather. The action shifts from schoolrooms to country roads to boarding houses to the imagined places of a bookworm's fantasies. Jack deals with many people in many ways and is treated by them as variously. Years pass in the book, attitudes change, and no relationship is set in stone. *This Boy's Life* is truly a life.

None of the above is meant to shrivel the adaptation by means of invidious comparison, but as a qualification of what the moviemakers have done. The film is good and has its own peculiar excitements. But does it stand by itself or does it drive you back to its source in order to get a truly clear view of a life? I think the latter.

This film doesn't feel like a life but like a horror story. Of course, real lives do contain horrors but the word "contain" makes my point: horrors are contained, slightly mitigated or dulled by the flux of everyday life. (Extreme horrors like concentration camp experiences or episodes of torture, draw their particular awfulness from, among other things, the obliteration of life's variety.) The worst events in the book are just as miserable as what's shown on screen, but they are embedded in a larger life that is endurable, sometimes agreeable. Of course, screenwriter Robert Getchell and director Michael Caton-Jones are far too skilled and sensible to hurl one scene of abuse after another at us. They vary their movie's mood with scenes of humor and idyllicism: Jack goofing off on the piano with a pal, walks through town and rides around the Washington state countryside while plotting one's entrance into adulthood. But these less intense passages are like the scenes in war movies in which soldiers in foxholes exchange wisecracks between rounds of mortar fire.

Here the mortar fire is coming from Robert De Niro and you can see why he got the job. The stepfather, Dwight, is both a brute and a geek. De Niro's most famous characterization, Jake La Motta in *Raging Bull*, was the most searing portrait of male savagery in decades. But his Rupert Pumkin in *The King of Comedy* was a masterpiece in quite another vein: a comic portrait of a loser of monstrous proportions. If La Motta made you shudder, then Pumkin made you laugh, then shudder. As Dwight, De Niro combines La Motta and Rupert but achieves a third character completely different from the predecessors. Dwight—Lawrence Welk fan, would-be Great Hunter thoroughly bested by his wife at a turkey shoot, proud coiner of such witticisms as "You can call me anything you want but don't call me late for dinner"—is like a walking compendium of everything in the 1950s that was tasteless and fatuous. And the fatuousness underpins the man's brutality. This Dwight ,who preens in front of a mirror in his new scoutmaster's uniform while letting his stepson flounder in a suit several sizes too big, may be a joke but he's clearly insensitive enough for the greater cruelties to come. We laugh but all too soon we will cringe.

And all too often, perhaps. The marriage lasted for years. Why? Both the book and the movie clearly show that the mother initially was sacrificing herself in order to give the boy a father and a respectable middle-class existence. But since hostility broke out so soon between the two males with most of the blame clearly attached to Dwight, and since Jack soon seemed headed again for delinquency, very much because of his new family situation, why didn't this spunky, even footloose woman take her son and get out? Ellen Barkin's juiciness and wit, both as an actress and physical presence, only make the question nag. There's no satisfactory answer in the movie. If you need one, it's in the book and it's completely believable.

Monsters spend a relatively small part of their waking lives being monstrous. The book's Dwight is just as repellent as De Niro's *when* he's being repellent. But most of the time he does what most of us do: goes about his business and leisure and is perfectly innocuous while doing so. Moreover, in scenes such as the one in which stepfather and boy go on a painting binge in the living room, or the one in which the two unite with the rest of the family to fend off the smarmy suitor of the daughter of the house, it becomes clear to the reader that a sort of bond did occasionally form between the antagonists. Life is like this: routine, familiarity, boredom, common foes, all contribute toward making the intolerable tolerable; and thus do four years of incompatibility pass. But you won't understand this by watching the movie. You will instead feel, from time to time, like screaming at Ellen Barkin, "Good God, woman, pack your bags!" By removing the rationale of dailiness from the story, the moviemakers have changed well-rounded characters into a monster and his victims and have turned *This Boy's Life* into *Raging Stepfather*.

Robert Getchell's dialogue is idiomatic and taut, and this



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writer knows how to begin a scene on a deceptive note of calm before making it gradually mount to violence. Caton-Jones's direction aims for the gut and lands, repeatedly. David Watkin's cinematography makes the Washington state landscapes not postcard-beautiful but resonant with the spaciousness and freedom that Jack so sorely desires. De Niro and Barkin deliver the emotional goods and Leonardo Di Caprio, as Jack, is more than promising: he illuminates what is already complex in the boy's character and foreshadows the greater complexity of the man who will someday tell this story. (But it was a mistake to have Di Caprio read the narration on the soundtrack. The voice should have been that of an older man looking back on his youth.)

Good movie? Good horror movie. A "true story"? Not true enough. This movie doesn't have the multifariousness of life.

RICHARD ALLEVA

## STAGE

# THE WHAT, THE HOW, THE WHO

'TOMMY' & 'STORIES'

I never understood viscerally what being outside the loop meant until I went to see *The Who's Tommy,* which had been called simply *Tommy* in most of the preopening publicity until it occurred to the producers that there might be people like a friend of mine who wondered if it was about English soldiers in World War I. The audience was full of aging young people who knew the music and responded enthusiastically, often in anticipation of a song that had been signaled by its opening notes. So nostalgic a reaction could hardly be expected by someone like me, who grew up on Harry James and Larry Clinton and for whom The Who was little more than a recognizable name. I did see the gaudy film Ken Russell made of the rock opera in 1975, but I have no clear memory of it: in one ear/eye and out the other. So I came to the new musical as a relative innocent.

It is a lapel-grabbing show that commands attention and has been nominated for eleven Tony Awards. The music, as one would expect, is played at very high volume, appropriately for songs like "I'm Free" and the somewhat extraneous "Acid Queen." But even songs like "See Me, Feel Me," which seems to me both musically and lyrically sentimental, and the uplifting "Welcome" assault rather than tickle the ear drums. I often found it difficult to understand the lyrics, as in Paul Kandel's rendition of Uncle Ernie's "Fiddle About," but that goes with the territory; I have spent decades failing to hear lyrics that young listeners seem to have no trouble learning, and, when they have been repeated to me, that hardly seemed worth remembering. If I sound simply querulous in this paragraph, I apologize. I am not really the father from *Bye, Bye Birdie,* who asked in "Kids" what's wrong with Sammy Kaye. If *Tommy*'s music is not my music, I suspect that it is also not the music of the rap generation. For us outsiders, its acceptance depends on the way it works within the show.

The production as a whole pushes as the music does. It is staged by Des McAnuff and choreographer Wayne Cilento so that there is seldom a pause in the action, except for the blind, deaf, and dumb Tommy who stands catatonically while the churning busyness goes on around him. When hurrying on foot is not enough, there are the high-fly wires that let the adult Tommy Peter Pan in to comfort his earlier selves. The staging is a wonder of high-tech graphics—projections, videos, special effects—that keep the eye darting from screen to screen, from one corner of the stage to another. Most of them are intensifications of plot developments or images of the confused mind of Tommy. While the show is in progress, it is difficult not to be pulled into all that light and sound, and that, after all, is what theater is supposed to do. It was only as I left the theater, my ears and eyes settling down, that I began to wonder what all this flamboyance was in aid of. That is where the book comes in.

*Tommy* is the story of a young boy, the witness of a murder, who, exhorted to silence by his parents, becomes deaf, dumb, and blind. He becomes a pinball wizard, as the song says, and once his senses return in a mirror-breaking moment, he becomes a superstar, a cruel cult figure, and, finally, over the protests of his followers, a normal fellow—even as you and I. The book has been rewritten by the musical's chief composer/lyricist, Peter Townshend, and director McAnuff in a way that deeply offends true believers from the past like Jon Pareles, who complained in the *New York Times* (April 27), "Their changes turn a blast of spiritual yearning, confusion, and rebellion into a pat on the head for nesters and couch potatoes." If so, it is an odd turning. I assume that Tommy's return to his family, the presumed embrace of normalcy, is supposed to make the musical more appealing in a less questioning time than the 1960s. Still, the family consists not only of the parents, who committed or condoned a murder, but of Uncle Eddie, who sexually abused the helpless Tommy, and Cousin Kevin, who tortured the boy with and without the help of his fellow teen-age thugs. This sounds like an occasion for a bitterly ironic curtain, but the music seems to be saying that now everything is hunky-dory.

The row of television screens across the top of the stage at *Tommy* seemed familiar, and then I recalled that a few days earlier I had seen a similar row across the bottom of the stage at the Annenberg Center in Philadelphia when the American Music Theater Festival presented the world première of *Stories from the Nerve Bible* with words, images, and music by Laurie Anderson. There seemed less music than in other Anderson shows I have seen, but it was the usual electronically manipulated sounds, and the words, delivered in her conversationally charming way, either added up to rather appealing stories or came across as poetic platitudes. It was the technical effects, however, that gave the show its special quality. Unlike *Tommy*, in which the images were plot-based, Anderson's images, except when they spelled out the words she had just spoken, were social/politi-



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cal comments (a burning house that turned into a burning book, the Desert Storm bomb strikes) or sometimes comic routines. There was a funny one which made a dance from shots of people coming out of rest rooms. The images could be seen either on the platoon of television sets or else on multiple screens—one of them a globe—hanging overhead. The visual high point of the show was a laser creation in which Anderson seemed to be entering a mysterious bright-light cave with only her violin bow as weapon. I have no idea what it meant if it meant anything other than that the audience was supposed to be dazzled by the effect. As usual with Laurie Anderson productions, I found myself attracted to a work which, had it been shorn of its fascinating effects, reduced to *what* rather than *how* Anderson was communicating, would have seemed commonplace.

GERALD WEALES

## MEDIA

# IT'S NOT HELL, JUST LIMBAUGH

## EXCELLENCE IN BOMBAST

Celeste, with connubial exasperation dripping from every word: "You're going to watch him *again*?"

"Well, yeah," I said, lighting up and punching in channel 13. "I said I'd write about him."

"But you've been watching him for a week, now," she said.

"Okay, look," I said, taking a long drag and deciding to come clean, "I can't help it: I get a *kick* out of Rush Limbaugh."

"Mph," she mphed, leaving the den. With the cat.

Well, it is the kind of thing you only admit to your wife and/or your best friend, *nicht wahr*? Sort of like owning up to a preference for brandy boilermakers or the Captain and Tenille: not quite, as the Brits say, "the *done* thing."

Rush Limbaugh—just in case you're recently back from a UFO abduction—is—is—oh, hell.

He's a two- or three-hundred-pound (it varies) ultraconservative in a dark Dacron-looking suit and some of the ugliest neckties ever allowed on TV, with a face uncannily like the later Orson Welles and the vaguely West-Texas accent of a televangelist. He's been for years now the host and the only star performer on a radio show where he happily expresses opinions that have been known to send even mild liberals running for the Xanax bottle. He makes very large bucks selling copies of videotapes where he does the same thing. He's the author of a book, *The Way Things Ought to Be* (Pocket), where he says the same stuff he says on his radio show and his videos, and which is selling just fine, thank you. And now he's the host and star performer on his own, syndicated TV show. Where he says the same stuff. Here's some of the stuff he says.

On "Today," the third day of the L.A. riots, it was ol' Rush who first insisted that the real cause of the riots was not the Rodney King verdict, nor yet the urban frustration of inner Los Angeles, but those perky liberal telecopters who *covered* the riot. On his own show, ol' Rush continually referred to Spike Lee's *Malcolm X* as "Malcolm the Tenth," and suggested that students who wanted to cut classes to see the premiere (as Lee had urged) should go all the way emulating the film's hero, and loot the candy counters in the theater lobbies. He insists again and again that the capitalist system, as it stands, is full of benefits, joy, seashells, and balloons for the people really willing to work at it; that nothing is really wrong, except for the liberals; that Rodney King obviously was a threat to the four cops who beat the hell out of him. And, since the inauguration, each installment of his show begins with the legend, "America under Siege," and usually with a Monty Python-style cartoon of Clinton, Hillary, or somebody from the new administration.

Ol' Rush. If media genius is targeting, arousing, and maintaining the *precise* audience you need to keep on the air, then this is the man.

The wonderful thing about Limbaugh, though, is not that he expresses irresponsible and often vile opinions for an eager audience who, apparently *like* irresponsible and vile opinions. That has been done in America since the electromagnetic media were born: who can forget Father Coughlin or Joe McCarthy? The wonderful thing is that Brother Limbaugh, as far as I know, is the first ultraconservative on the scene to understand that his outrageousness can only be sustained by the media. Limbaugh may or may not really believe everything he says. But he does know, and has acknowledged, that what he says is, in its outrageousness, just what allows him to stay on the air and keep saying it and keep making money. Like a radio shock-jock, he understands that his opinions are a commodity whose adrenalin-content can never be allowed to drop, that every show is an audition. Think of Rush Limbaugh, in his frantic quest for permanent outrage, as a Rotarian Howard Stern.

That wise man, Neil Postman, wrote in his 1985 book, *Amusing Ourselves to Death*, that one of the most deleterious effects of TV culture was the transformation of political discourse into showbiz. When everything becomes "entertainment," Postman argues, even presidential campaigns are emptied of their fundamental seriousness: and this, mind you, three years before George Bush made Willie Horton his running mate and *seven* years before Ross Perot and Razorback Bill Clinton made campaigning an extended talk-show. I'm not entirely sure that I agree with the full darkness of Postman's prognosis: the last campaign seems to me to have produced



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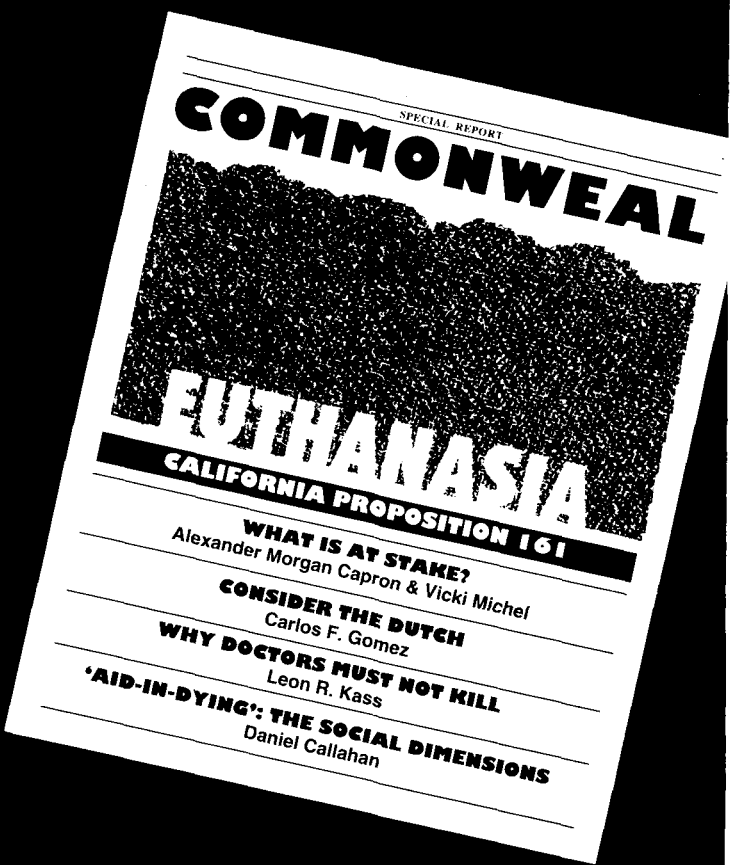


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some very good things, indeed. But the Limbaugh phenomenon surely is, whatever else it is, a textbook sample of the Postman principle.

Think about the chief media voices on the conservative side before Limbaugh. The most audible/visible have to be William F. Buckley, Jr., and George F. Will. Both authors are also TV products, but with a kind of virginal recalcitrance about, you know, getting too seriously involved. What both these characters have in common is, first, that they are writers *before* they are TV folks: Buckley, perennially encumbered by a hypertrophied vocabulary, the founder of *National Review*, and Will, a syndicated columnist, imprisoned in the cell of his own compulsive allusiveness. What they also have in common is a deep reluctance, when they are on TV, to be *on* TV: notice how seldom either ever looks directly at the camera; notice how Bill's languorous, Oscar Wildean intonations and George's quick, nervous, prep-school-debater's ripostes (one of his own favorite words) are designed to hold the tacky business of TV performance at a tweedy arm's length. It can be embarrassing, like watching the school librarian trying to get loose and boogie at the class picnic.

But not Rush. He loves the camera. His show is done with a studio audience, but it's clear that they are there to laugh and applaud at the right times, and nothing else. This is *television*, dammit. And, half-improvised as every half-hour is—ol' Rush seldom completes the agenda he maps out at the top of the show—Limbaugh always manages, just like a good lecturer or a good tent-preacher, to bring his final point home with just the right solemnity, earnestness, and half-octave drop in the voice. Speaking strictly as somebody who makes his living giving large lectures, I can attest: he's a beautiful performer.

But even that isn't why I get a kick out of him. It's because he is basically the first truly postmodern conservative. His positions are, on the whole, deeply offensive to anybody who doesn't think that Pat Buchanan and Pat Robertson are, as I believe them to be, mutant aliens. But Rush, with sublime and often self-kidding good humor, knows that the offensiveness is the *gig*. He laughs a lot at what he says—can you imagine Bill Buckley laughing?—and his audience laughs along with him laughing at himself and, implicitly, at the whole show. I'm not even sure, in fact, that he mightn't be an *agent provocateur*, a crypto-liberal employed by, say, *Mother Jones* or the *Progressive* to make the ultraconservative stance so obviously untenable, such a parody of anything approaching responsible political speech, as to discredit it altogether as anything but entertainment. It's too much to hope, I suppose, but it would be Neil Postman's revenge; the moment when politics as showbiz becomes so clearly showbiz that it clears the psychic space, once again, for politics as politics.

Whether intended or not, though, that is the final effect of the "Rush Limbaugh Show," which I devoutly hope runs at least as long as the Clinton administration. The guy, for crying out loud, reminds us that the Tube is not the real world, and that the problems that seem so solvable on the Tube really, really aren't. Like a classic Court Fool, Ol' Rush in his simplicity calls us back to the seriousness of the things we really have to get done. Or like the glitter rockers of the early seventies, he reminds us that the medium is not the message, that the medium is just the self-involved, profit-oriented bloody medium, and that the message is way beyond and way below its blandishments.

Did I call Rush a Rotarian Howard Stern? Better yet, Rush is to the conservative agenda what David Bowie was to commercial rock'n'roll: its maybe self-conscious and surely entertaining *reductio ad absurdum*.

FRANK McCONNELL

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Miriam Finkelstein

## Unraveling

"Oh, says my theater companion at the end of the play,
"I'm unraveling."
A long black thread is attached to her cuff.
"It's not you," I say. "It's me,"
And disconnect her from the thread

Whose other end is attached to the hem of my skirt.
I had noticed it beginning
Just after the intermission. I had hoped,
Vainly it seems,
That it would stop.

I walk gingerly to the curb where my friend,
With her usual
Dramatic aplomb, commandeers a taxi.
I pray I will not come further apart
Until I get home.

Now I sit on my bed, peering into the eye of a needle
Through which I am trying
To put not a camel
But a tiny tendril of polyester.
I had come undone so silently, so quickly.
This part will take longer.

Lou Ella Hickman, I.W.B.S.

## Needle's Eye

*(Mark 10:25)*

candle is the needle's eye
that out of such darkness should come light
surprise at the common place
I dance
I become thread
for the sewing
as candle is the seeing



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# What's missing in this picture?

**CHRISTIANITY IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY**
**Robert Wuthnow**
Oxford University Press, $25, 251 pp.

**Philip J. Murnion**

Robert Wuthnow would be a valuable participant in any symposium on American religion. He has a broad knowledge of religious studies as well as a rich trove of personal anecdotes from the lives of church members and leaders. He would present all of this in an irenic and respectful manner that would encourage dialogue. These qualities are evident in *Christianity in the Twenty-first Century*, which constitutes a kind of updating of *The Restructuring of American Religion* (Princeton), his 1988 treatment of religion in post-World War II America.

This new book might be better titled, *The Future of Liberal American Protestantism*, for, though both fundamentalism and the "religious Right" are given considerable attention, Wuthnow betrays a need to explain the two mainly as challenges to mainstream Protestantism. Catholicism is treated only in passing, though readers concerned with its future will benefit from Wuthnow's reflections on the social and cultural forces affecting religious believers and the churches as well as from his description of church dynamics set in play when responding to these forces.

Wuthnow's concern is with the maintenance of individual and communal identity in the midst of institutional, ethical, doctrinal, political, and cultural challenges. These challenges can be met, respectively, if the church can be a community that is: mutually supportive, compassionate, inclusive, able to mediate religious values and public life, and ground a secure personal identity. The obstacles are, in the culture, individualism, mobility, and materialism; within the churches themselves, a preoccupation with bureaucratic needs and the polarization between liberals and conservatives; and the temporary and utilitarian character of commitment that is a common problem to both church and society.

Community is central and Wuthnow considers it progress that, where family or state once determined one's religious community, the church itself must now warrant that choice and commitment. But there is little precision about what constitutes community. The features he looks for in church community seem to boil down to mutual personal support and care among those who live near each other. This immediacy of community is perhaps finally expressed in the Epilogue where he expresses his fear that the churches may be ill-suited to provide community, unrealistically expecting people to "forge some *intimate* bond" [emphasis added] when meeting only once a week. It is surprising then that he is skeptical of the small group movement for fostering Christian community. He wonders if they are adequately Christian or sustainable without institutional support.


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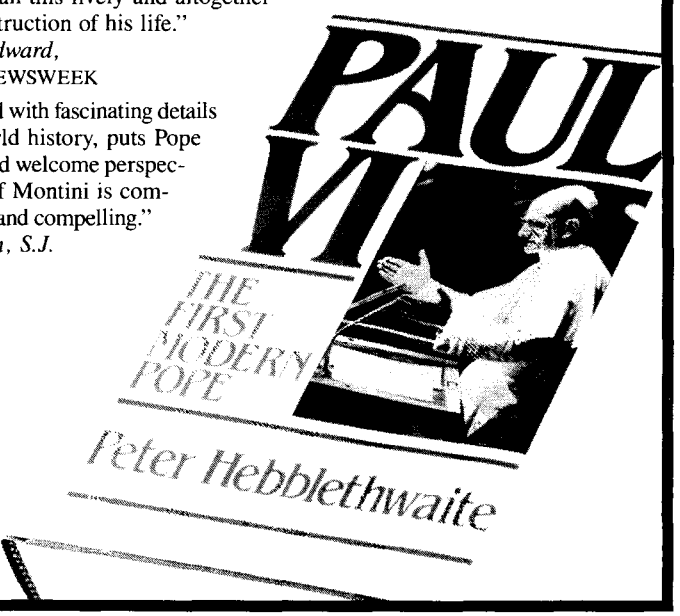


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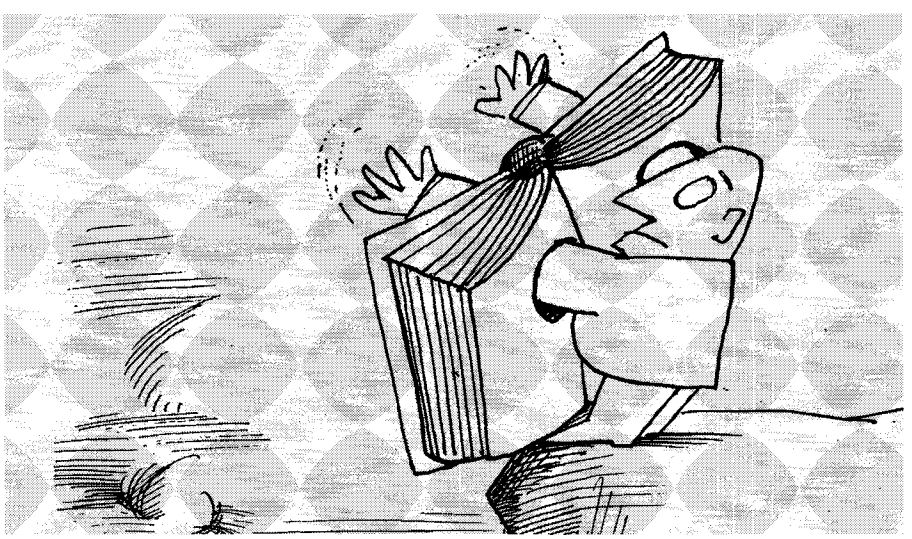
What then will help? Wuthnow turns to stories as the ground for a "community of memory" that would meet institutional challenges as well as ethical ones. The stories he finds significant are those of compassion. Unfortunately this reduces ethics almost entirely to compassion—not the worst thing—but it hardly provides an adequate treatment of ethical norms or behavior. Even so, the function of stories remains elusive. His data, assembled from interviews, suggest that stories provide people with lessons for living. Yet the evidence presented is that one's own stories, one's own memories of being treated with generous compassion by others have some impact. Consequently, while simply-put narratives are recommended as the best kind of preaching, he offers no evidence that vicarious experiences have the power to shape moral behavior.

If ethics is reduced to compassion, doctrine is even more narrowly construed. Again stories are central: "Elaborate philosophical and theological doctrines sometimes supply rational answers that satisfy canons of logic and empirical evidence....But in daily life the enduring questions of human existence are more likely to be addressed through narratives, proverbs and maxims, and iconic representations rich with experiential connotations." The problem is that stories as a strategy and medium for communicating doctrine and motivating response seem to be self-validating. How are they grounded in revelation and theology?

Having urged stories, Wuthnow then devotes most of the section on doctrine to fundamentalism as though the challenge of fundamentalism is that it insists that doctrine is more than metaphor. (Curiously, although Wuthnow criticizes liberal Protestantism for becoming "reactionary" by letting fundamentalism "set the agenda," he himself devotes a quarter of the book directly and many pages indirectly to what is variously and confusingly called "fundamentalism, the Right, and conservatism.") Wuthnow's own take on doctrine may be best expressed in a chapter headed: "Living the Question," where he writes: "It seems to me that Christianity does not so much supply the learned person with answers as it does raise questions." I cannot resist the temptation to compare this with Vaclav Havel's concern with "living in truth."

Wuthnow marshals scientific evidence for his diagnoses and prescriptions. Yet just as he makes a leap of faith regarding the impact of stories on moral formation, so he draws inferences from his data which seem doubtful, mainly because of what I would call misplaced significance. For example, he links the development of compassion with personal crisis: 38 percent of those who had a personal crisis became involved in charitable or social service activities, compared with only 28 percent of those who have never had a personal crisis (who are these people?). Yes, that is statistically significant. Yet that means that the remaining 62 percent of those who have had a personal crisis are not involved in compassionate work. The more important inference is that personal crises are but marginally effective in fostering compassion. There are other examples in the book of mistaking statistical significance for significance indeed. In other words, Wuthnow's arguments often seem circumstantial, assembling pieces of evidence no one piece of which, nor all of which, is conclusive, but whose assembly offers a plausible account of a reality with deeper causes and needing deeper analysis.



More than disagreeing with Wuthnow's analysis, I found myself noticing how much was missing: the essential components of community, ethics, doctrine, public life, and personal religious identity seem to be so watered down that the really tough questions of social solidarity, of ethics as virtue, of doctrine as truth, of public policy as justice, and of identity as integrity are not dealt with. When he gets down to cases, Wuthnow knows that there must be more to the church than he has accounted for in his analysis: "The middle class needs the moral guidance of the churches in charting its material commitments [and other commitments?]....the *bold voice of moral authority* [emphasis added] in limiting its commitments to the workplace and the countinghouse....It needs to know that it is right, good, worthy, legitimate, proper—whatever words are used—to hear the laughter of children, to alleviate the anguish of the poor, to explore the inner depths of our souls, and to seek God." The word authority this late in the analysis (page 201) is as startling as the even later (page 216) statement that "Christianity in the future will continue to be pluralistic, but will remain committed to the assumption that some perspectives come closer to representing *divine truth* than others" [emphasis added].

These citations reflect the tension between Wuthnow the believer and Wuthnow the social scientist—this is the work of a man who cares about the future of individuals, community life, and the church. Yet a fuller analysis of Christianity in the twenty-first century would have to tackle more directly its claims to truth, the supernatural and worship, moral authority and individual conscience, and other central questions, and would have to look a little deeper into many of the forces that Wuthnow describes. □



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# NEITZSCHE ♡ MADONNA

**SEX, ART, AND AMERICAN CULTURE**
Essays
**Camille Paglia**
Vintage Books, $13, 337 pp.

**Christopher Thomas**

Two years ago an obscure humanities professor in Philadelphia, Camille Paglia, burst on American higher education and the press like a bombshell, firing raucous, unconventional views in all directions—on feminism, popular culture, Madonna, human nature, date rape, and almost everything else. Her style of presentation, more or less that of a stormtrooper in jackboots, has not always made it easy to hear her, and this book makes a valuable introduction to her ideas and opinions.

Paglia came to public notice in 1990 after her gigantic book *Sexual Personae: Art and Decadence from Nefertiti to Emily Dickinson* (Yale University Press) appeared. This is quite a swath, and it reveals the mind of one who must lecture to undergraduates several times a week on anything and everything. Beneath her bluster Paglia is a woman of staggering learning and a fine writer, one who takes the craft seriously. In *Sexual Personae* she argues that a definable set of archetypes, including the beautiful boy, the dandy, the mother goddess, and the vampire, recurs cyclically throughout the history of Western culture and gives it a coherent if raunchy pattern. She emphasizes the savage and erotic—Nietzsche's "Dionisian"—over the "Apollonian," or rational and orderly, and sees culture and life in society as requiring the wearing of masks (*personae*) to give disciplined expression to wild, libidinous human nature. As big as it is, this is only the first of two volumes; the second will treat her obsessions in twentieth-century popular culture, "cinema, television, sports, rock music." Here we can expect to find evidence of the wine god's work aplenty.

*Sex, Art, and American Culture* is a collection of her miscellaneous writings produced since *Sexual Personae*. Its core is a long essay which began as a review of two books on a subject close to her heart, homosexuality in ancient Greece. After cutting the books to ribbons, she launches into a forty-page afterword diagnosing the ills of American higher education which have encouraged such sloppy, trendy scholarship. A hilarious pop version of the essay follows, in the form of a lecture she gave at MIT on "Crisis in the American Universities." There are, besides, two pieces on date rape, a phenomenon she takes seriously but has little patience for (young women should learn to take care of themselves, she says); several reviews of books, art exhibitions, and current events (Clarence Thomas and Anita Hill); and brief essays on those sexual personae *par excellence*, Madonna and Liz Taylor. Packed in at the end is a section of cartoons and commentary about herself—an unusual appendix in an academic book. The target for which she reserves her most potent venom is "academic feminism," which she thinks fascistic and glacial. She cannot abide its version of history as a dank, oppressive blanket of "patriarchy," and, instead, extols male power and creativity, which she claims have built the world. Most feminists detest her, but she is one herself, though one for whom the term coined in the sixties, "women's liberationist," is more apt. That is, she claims freedom and equality for women but does not hate men or blame them for all the evils in the world.

More deeply, she opposes the devaluation of nature by feminism and other recent intellectual movements that overestimate the power of culture. This, she says, has to do with Americans' subservience since about 1970 to fashionable


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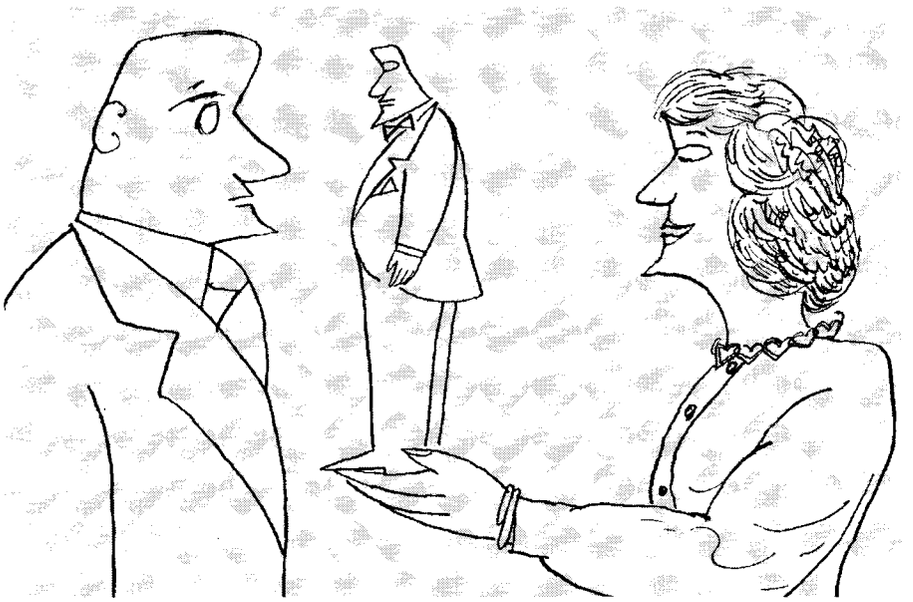

French intellectuals like Foucault, Derrida, and Lacan (her three arch-villains). Her awareness of the role of nature owes, she says, to having been raised in a big, feisty Italian-American family and to her roots in Roman Catholicism. Images of martyred saints in churches and procession are "evidence of the ancient, buried paganism of Roman Catholicism." (I wonder if she has darkened the doors of many Catholic churches lately; she would be disappointed.) She owes a vast intellectual debt to Nietzsche, the source of the Apollonian and Dionisian categories in which she puts so much stock, and her own persona, with its quick, caustic judgment and zany sense of humor, is a triumph of Dionisianism.

Paglia's heat and directness are in refreshing contrast to the turgid, labyrinthine prose one meets too often in the humanities today, and I warmly second her appeal to North American scholars to end their affair with cynical, pessimistic currents in continental theory and philosophy and return to the wellspring of Anglo-American pragmatic empiricism. The problem is that the theories that form *her* building-blocks have their drawbacks, too. True, as Procrustean beds go, the ideas of Freud and Nietzche fit better than most and are certainly more energizing and liberating; but they are Procrustean beds nonetheless and do not always accommodate reality well.

In particular I find her obsession with sexuality, especially sadomasochism, disturbing and a bit frightening. For her, sex is a path into the unevolved wildness of nature, Freud as rewritten by the Brothers Grimm. But her fixation on this makes her seem at times like a one-trick pony. There are countless other avenues to nature and reality: sports, music, and theater (of all kinds), vacations, raising children (Paglia is single), arguing, fighting, laughing, crying, political debate, and on and on. While she does not mean to overlook these (to the contrary, I think), her emphasis falls too often on sex, especially its darker, kinkier forms. This leads her to make questionable judgments. For example, she praises Robert Mapplethorpe, whose shocking photographs of sexual pain and degradation raised such a ruckus three years ago, and calls him her "spiritual brother." (The cackling patriarch of this strange family is the Marquis de Sade.) She urges us to see in Mapplethorpe's photos the latest chapter in the Western chronicle of the mysterious, uncontrollable side of sexuality. This is valid, but... "spiritual brother"? Mapplethorpe's aim, I think, was precisely to make such brotherhood impossible. Similarly, she adores rock music and considers it an authentic art, a contemporary manifestation of "the Romantic archetypes of energy, passion, rebellion, and demonism." (I confess I like some rock myself.) But how can she reconcile that with her concerns for cultural quality, continuity, and resonance? Among her more bizarre ideas is to send rockers to art schools (like John Lennon) and give them NEA grants. But why would "brawling, boozy bad boys...storming from city to city" let themselves be co-opted that way? This is High Noon in Dodge City, not luncheon at the National Gallery of Art!

Parents, too, may have difficulty recognizing their children (and themselves) in her colorful, timeless archetypes. Boys have a harder time growing up than girls, she says, because they must not only identify with the masculine but also leave the feminine, in the person of their mothers, behind. Experience and psychological research tend to bear her out on this, but her image of men and boys as primitive, macho denizens of forest and sports bar—one, incidentally, not unlike that pushed by the men's movement—is a simplistic caricature. Like women, we men are complex, changeful creatures, and while reading Paglia I kept wishing she had boys of her own to raise to test against her theories. I suspect she would find (as some feminists have) that children have a way of breaking out of stereotypes. She has a real flair for acute description of personality types, but no one fits them exactly. Some college women who are raped on dates are indeed overprivileged, naive, and self-righteous, but some are victims of terrible crimes. And the ancient archetype of the prostitute as the scarlet woman who finds out men's weakness and crushes their gonads under her stiletto heel is a literary type, but how many prostitutes on the street tonight feel like her or have her power? Life conforms to art only in a measure.

In short, the reader, while enjoying Paglia's chutzpah and being challenged by her daring, must beware of being seduced. She asks good questions, and her answers are often refreshingly liberating. Her bias against theory is a valuable corrective, but we all operate from theories, and hers must be seen as theories too, not gospel. □

## REVIEWERS

REV. PHILIP J. MURNION *is director of the National Pastoral Life Center.*

CHRISTOPHER THOMAS *is assistant professor of art history at the University of Victoria in Victoria, British Columbia.*



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# Missionaries, martyrs, & discontents

Lawrence S. Cunningham

The revised edition of Jack Finegan's now standard work (first published in 1969) is a welcome addition to biblical studies. Lavishly illustrated (there are 344 black and white illustrations consisting of photographs, architectural drawings, and maps), with an unfailingly readable text, this is an extremely affordable reference work. Finegan's basic plan is to devote sections of the book to every place associated with the life of Jesus (the section on Jerusalem runs to over a hundred pages) and to describe all significant archaeological finds—whether they be structures, artifacts, buildings, epigraphical evidence, cemeteries—connected with that place. Because Finegan pays attention to material both before and after the time of Jesus, the evidence he adduces and illustrates is put into a larger context. Each specific entry ends with a pertinent bibliography.

**The Archaeology of the New Testament: The Life of Jesus and the Beginnings of the Early Church**, *by Jack Finegan, Princeton University Press, $29.95, 409 pp.*

At the beginning of the book there is a descriptive list of every ancient visitor/pilgrim who visited the Holy Places with an analysis of what they saw. Finegan also includes useful tables of chronology, ancient calendars, a list of all early Christian bishops, festivals in the early church, and a table of archaeological and historical periods in Palestine. After the survey of New Testament sites, which makes up the bulk of the work, there is an interesting section on ancient tombs, rounded out with a brief section on Jewish catacombs outside of ancient Palestine (e.g., in Rome) contemporary with the time of Jesus. The book ends with a lengthy analysis of the use of the sign of the cross both before the time of Christ (e.g., the Hebrew *Taw* sign as a shorthand word for God) and as it evolves in the Christian tradition.

Finegan's work can be used as a reference tool but it also can be read as a continuous narrative. It has the added advantage of allowing one to turn from the text to a lingering look at the illustrations. Finegan cites all epigraphical materials in the original Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, or Latin with accompanying translations.

Both the author who revised the book and the publisher should be lauded for giving us—to use the parlance of the moment—such a user-friendly work.

My suspicion is that most of us account for the spread of Christianity in this fashion: After the historical life of Jesus, the Christian movement took hold in ancient Palestine and, slowly but surely, spread westward following the littoral of the Mediterranean Sea with aspirations, in the lifetime of Paul, of getting as far west as the Iberian peninsula. Subsequently, our attention gets riveted on this geography with a now-and-again blink eastward to, say, Syriac Christianity.

**A History of Christianity in Asia (Volume One)**, *by Samuel Hugh Moffett, HarperCollins, $45, 560 pp.*

It is the precise merit of Moffett's bulky history to think of ancient Palestine as a western border of a vibrant Christianity which was in place not only in the area of Syriac speaking peoples, but in ancient Persia and, following the silk and spice routes, in what is present-day Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, and China. Of necessity, this volume, which brings the story down to 1500, is a welter of names, places, cultural crosscurrents, and varying religious traditions, both within and apart from Christianity. The very detail of this history makes for tough going but the rewards are enormous. Moffett weighs the evidence for the apostolicity of the Thomas Christians of Indians; discusses evidences for early Christian settlements in Korea; traces out the enormous creative theology existing in Syriac; and in numbing detail examines the relationship of Christianity to Islam, etc.

Specific vignettes add spice to the story. My favorite (among many tough choices) is his narration of two thirteenth-century Mongol monks (Nestorian Christians) who walked from the city of Peking on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Sidetracked by

LAWRENCE S. CUNNINGHAM *chairs the department of theology at the University of Notre Dame.*

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war, they spent time in Persia. One made it to Rome where he was received by the pope. After a visit to France and a reception from Philip the Fair (as well as a guided tour of Paris's vast relic collection), he went back to Rome where he was invited to celebrate the liturgy before the pope according to his native usage.

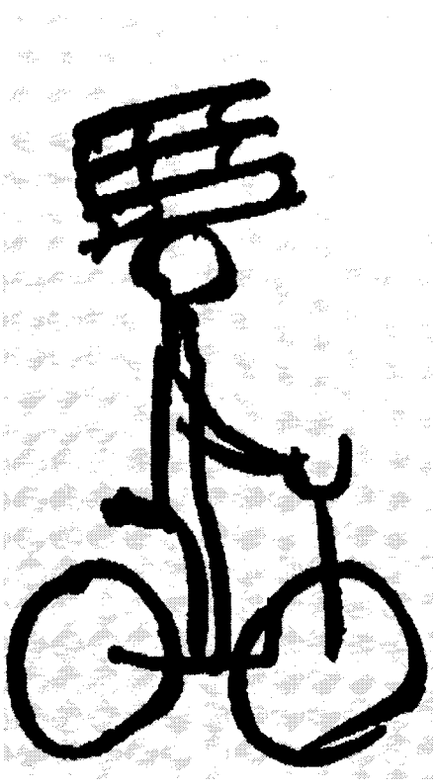
One thing is quite certain: anyone who has the patience to read through this long work will look at the history of Christianity in a quite different light. It should give pause to those who natter on about the church as the realm of Dead White European Males. Moffett brings us a panorama of Semitic, Indian, Asian, Mongol, Persian, and African peoples of both sexes and of many gifts.

**Martyr of Brotherly Love,** *by Adalbert Balling and Reinhard Abeln, Crossroad, $14.95, 107 pp.*

The memoirs and biographies of those who suffered at the hands of the Nazis in concentration camps are already multitudinous. As that period recedes into history we will see more biography and less autobiography but nobody would seriously argue that the stream of literature ought to dry up. The current genocidal horrors around the world should remind us that there are lessons yet to be learned from the past if we are not to stand mutely by as fanatics carry out what is now being lugubriously called "ethnic cleansing."

*Martyr of Brotherly Love* is the biography of a young German priest, Engelmar Unzeitag (1911-45), who, two years after his ordination, was arrested by the Gestapo and sent to Dachau for "insidious expressions" in his sermons and coming to the "defense of the Jews." He died a few weeks before the liberation of the camp while serving as a volunteer in a typhus ward on the Dachau "plantation." One finds it hard to grasp that "only" 35,000 prisoners died there in its eleven-year existence since it was regarded as one of the "better" camps. The death toll would be much higher, however, if one were to total up those who were "selected" from the camp to be sent to the killing lagers in the East. Dachau housed over 3,000 clergy (all but 500 were Roman Catholic religious) who had an appalling death rate (especially the Polish clergy) from disease, execution, malnutrition, and abuse.

As I read this small book (reluctantly, since I always feel a bit like a voyeur when reading such chronicles) it occurred to me that someone yet needs to write an account of the Christian "spirituality" of the death camps. Has anyone examined in detail such heart-wrenching texts as the prayer to "Our Lady of Dachau" written by a priest in 1941 (he did not survive the year) or gained access to whatever written remains still exist in order to get into the minds of those who must have reflected on everything from the distance of God to the question of the church itself? I was peculiarly struck by the reminiscences of the Jesuit Johannes Lenz who described his life ("For six and a half years I was in prison; five in Dachau; three times in penalty battalions; twelve nights and days in the standing cell; two times close to death from typhus...etc.") in words not dissimilar to those of Paul describing his own life for Christ: "To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are ill-clad and buffeted and homeless..." (1 Cor. 4:11).



One reason for the publication of this touching book is to advance the canonization cause of Father Unzeitig which is being promoted by the Marianhill Missionaries to which he belonged. That might explain its somewhat hagiographical tone. Ah, well, canonize him if you must but keep him and the others out of the stained glass windows. Keep him and others like him alive in the minds of people today to remind us all that this is not ancient history but a persistently virulent possibility.

**Peasant Fires: The Drummer of Niklashausen,** *by Richard Wunderli, Indiana University Press, $8.95 (paper), 156 pp.*

In 1475 a German shepherd peasant, Hans Behem, also called the "drummer," stirred great discontent in his native area by preaching a series of fiery sermons, putatively inspired by the Blessed Virgin, attacking the higher clergy and the aristocracy who were the two main agents of peasant taxation. Records from the period are scanty but from them, and using other resources from the social history of the period, Wunderli writes a fine narrative in which he sets the obscure drummer-shepherd against the background of life in fifteenth-century Germany. Behem's fate, of course, was foreordained: arrested by knights in the employ of the bishop of Wurzburg, tortured as part of a court procedure, he was burned at the stake in the same year he preached to ever growing crowds of pilgrims. The church he frequented was razed to the ground.

Two generations later (in 1525), the peasantry of Germany revolted in a frenzy fired by the preachers of the so-called Radical Reformation. There was no causal connection between the events of 1476 and 1525, but one learns a good deal from Wunderli's analysis of peasant life to understand why the "little people" should have risen up.

Wunderli's work is marred by a few errors: The presence of animals in Nativity



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scenes does not derive from old folk motifs; it is a direct allusion to Isaiah 1:3; it was the Dominicans, not the Franciscans, who were the great apostles of the rosary; the desire of clerical reformers to go back to an earlier age was not "pure romanticism" but a strategy of *ressourcement* that has roots in the early patristic period; etc.

Despite these slight lapses, this book is exactly what the author wanted it to be: a narrative that makes history available to the informed public. The author uses both his imagination (he tells us when) and sound scholarship to tell an interesting story that is always, as we lurch toward the new millennium, a cautionary tale. I could not help thinking about all of the contemporary Marian apparitions as I read it.

**The Early Reformation in Europe,** *edited by Andrew Pettegre, Cambridge University Press, $15.95, 250 pp.*

Andre Pettregre had the sensible idea of asking these questions: Why did Luther's reformation spread so rapidly in the first thirty years of its existence in some places and not in others? How, exactly, did the process work by which Scandinavia *seems* to have a Lutheran state church so rapidly while other places (Switzerland) got mixed results and still others, conspicuously, Italy and Spain, resisted the clarion call for Luther's reform despite strong reforming waves in those countries? The editor's opening essay sets out this rather complicated agenda in a readable and coherent survey.

Pettegre commissioned a number of scholars (none from North America) to address specific areas from Spain to Hungary and respond to that query by surveying the best scholarship available for those discrete places. Space forbids me the leisure to give in capsule the results of this survey, but it is important to note some of the useful observations made by the authors. Peddegre himself notes that when the first impression of Luther as an Erasmian critic/reformer gave way to the picture of Luther as heretic/rebel, the perceived shift stiffened reactions to his ideas. Most of the authors note how powerful printed books and pamphlets were in the dissemination of Reformation ideas. Success or failure of the reform depended, in many places, on whether there was a leader powerful enough to articulate the reform and, also, whether that leader lived in an area where sociopolitical realities permitted such a voice.

Most of the authors resist the stereotypical image of a thoroughly corrupt church tottering on the edge of collapse. The widespread corruption of the higher and lower clergy as well as the hatred many felt for papal/episcopal/parochial taxation must be weighed against the vigorous stream(s) of lay piety found in countries as different as those along the Mediterranean and in England. Nor is class analysis avoided; authors ask why reform ideas got such an informed hearing among artisans in France? How much did "advanced" ideas of reform filter down from the learned salons of Italy? And why did the early English reformers share with their medieval counterparts (the Lollards) and the Swiss reformers such a burning hatred for shrines, pilgrimages, and other sacramentals?

This collection, especially in its less expensive paperback format, well may serve as an ancillary for courses on the Reformation. Some of the essays focus so unremittingly on political forces that religious issues themselves get marginalized while others are a lode of interesting data for religious understanding. Thus, for example, one must have a large appetite for royal politics to stay with the essay on Scandinavia while the one on Spain focuses almost entirely on theological issues. My bias, of course, is for the latter.

It is always sad to fall back on the reviewer's cliché, but I must say that this collection is a mixed bag: all of the essays are highly competent but some, from my perspective, are more meaty than others. It is not a book to read as a continuous narrative but, both for its essays and its bibliographies, it makes a good reference volume for those interested in church history in general and Reformation history in particular. □

## CORRESPONDENCE

*(Continued from page 2)*

fense; for only defense of the innocent neighbor could satisfy the stringent claims of charity.

For Thomas Aquinas, the intention to kill another was lawful only if "referred to the common good, as in the case of a soldier fighting against the foe." Indeed, the question posed in the *Summa Theologiae*, as Professor Pope notes, is whether "it is always a sin to wage war." Like Ambrose and Augustine, Thomas regarded the ideal of nonviolence as regulative; the precepts of the just war emerged as reasoned exceptions to what James Childress describes as the *prima facie* duty of nonmalevolence.

Yet though the norms of the just war (*jus ad bellum, jus in bello*) persist as the coin of the realm in the arguments of Mr. Bush, I believe we must question whether the currency is not debased. For the interpretative backdrop of Bush's defense of the Gulf War seemed far less indebted to Ambrose, Augustine, or Aquinas than to the realpolitik of Thomas Hobbes. For Hobbes, the relation among states ceased to be "naturally" pacific; the militant rhetoric of Hobbes's *Leviathan* dispelled the harmony of the medieval *jus naturale*; for the "state of nature" was aptly called "war, as of every man against every man." Indeed the sole "right" bequeathed to us in the state of nature was the very right to self-defense both Ambrose and Augustine denied. For Hobbes's heirs, war thus ceases to be a tragic exception to the "natural" ideal of nonviolence, justified only by the state's special province for the common good. In Clausewitz's famous dictum, war is but "a continuation of politics by other means." Violent self-preservation, no longer a "stain upon our love for neighbor" in Ambrose's words, is our natural right, writ large upon the "artificial person" of the state. For the state, writes Hans Morgenthau, "has no right to let its moral disapprobation...get in the way of successful political action, itself inspired by the moral principle of national survival."

If our application of the just-war norms occurs at such a great remove from the orig-



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inal Christian inspiration of charity and love of enemy, can we still say it is a Christian interpretation we invoke? For we cannot superimpose the grammar of the *justum bellum* upon the language of *Leviathan*. If our original description of war is beholden to Hobbesian realpolitik, i.e., if we assume that "successful political action" is "inspired by the moral principle of national survival," our application of the rules of the just war can only belie its religious heritage. Must we not admit that the "realpolitical" foreshortening of our moral horizon fundamentally distorted our interpretation and application of just-war norms, e.g., proportionality and last resort, in the war in the Gulf?

Saddam's villainy did not, by some perverse alchemy, establish our virtue. Christians, whether just-warriors or pacifists, must attest the primacy of neighbor-love in the ideal of nonviolence—not merely as one norm among many, but as the wellspring of our form of life. We must reclaim our voice in the public arena, lest the ultimate triumph of violence be the quietism of despair.

WILLIAM O'NEILL, S.J.

*The writer is assistant professor of social ethics at the Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley.*

## Pius XII and history

Birmingham, Ala.

*To the Editors:* Steven Englund's "New Light under the Old Bushel" [April 23] was very interesting but would have been better had it run thirty-six words longer. Englund refers to the "largely pro-Vichy French episcopacy." Given that the Holocaust looms throughout his article, he should have added, even if parenthetically:

"Of course, however corrupted or misguided, the bishops did not silently abide the Final Solution's reach into France. As noted in Wyman's *Abandonment of the Jews*, 'In France, deportations brought a barrage of denunciation. Several Roman Catholic prelates, including the archbishops of Paris, Lyon, and Toulouse, protested vigorously. The cardinals and archbishops of the Occupied Zone united in condemnation.'"

(Englund could also have noted that Cardinal Gerlier sheltered the Grand Rabbi of France and defied arrest threats to hide fifty Jewish children the Nazis sought for slaughter. But let's not get mushy.)

The arithmetically astute will note that this added text would have brought the piece up by 59 words, not 36. However, Englund should also have cut some 23 words in which he approvingly paraphrases a Jesuit theologian, Paul Valadier, who, he says, asks us to consider "our justified outrage when the church loses its courage to judge the state," and then offers Pius XII on the Jews as his example.

In truth, Pius did make clear, in act and word, his judgments both of Nazism in general and its treatment of Jews in particular. Very briefly, just some of the history now ignored:

- Pius personally acted as a channel of communication and mediation between the Allies and the German Resistance (Hoffman, *The History of the German Resistance 1933-1945*). Further, he petitioned for an end to deportations in, inter alia, Hungary (Marrus, *The Unwanted*) and northern Italy (Wyman, *Abandonment of the Jews*).
- Under the pope's personal orders, Catholic institutions in Rome opened their doors to fugitive Jews (Gilbert, *The Holocaust*). As a result, these Roman institutions alone hid 10 percent of all Italian Jewry (Zuccotti, *Italians and the Holocaust*).
- In his 1942 Christmas broadcast, Pius pleaded on behalf of "those hundreds of thousands, who, through no fault of their own, sometimes only by reason of their nationality or race, are marked down for death or progressive extinction" (Friedlander, *Pius XII and the Third Reich*)....

*"After much soul searching, I've forgiven myself."*

Pius's words needed little deciphering. During the war the *New York Times* praised him for "put[ting] himself squarely against Hitlerism," and described him as "a lonely voice," "about the only ruler left on the continent who dares to raise his voice" against persecution. On Pius's death in 1958 Israeli Foreign Minister Golda Meir recalled: "When fearful martyrdom came to our people in the decade of Nazi terror, the voice of the pope was raised for the victims" (Lapide, *Three Popes and the Jews*). Synagogues around New York City echoed with praise and gratitude for Pius XII, "an example for all religious leaders," "man at his highest" (*New York Times*, October 12, 1958).

Of course, this is not what is said today about the wartime pontiff. Indeed, according to a *Times* report, the child who visits Washington's new Holocaust museum will learn about a Vatican that simply kept "silent" as the central moral tragedy of this era unfolded. It was only later, the child will read, that the church mustered energy to counsel mercy—for those sentenced to die at Nuremberg. Never mind that Pius XII also asked the U.S. to spare the Rosenbergs after their conviction on the charge of having given atomic information to the century's second worst criminal.

Perhaps all this represents a trade with the world: the massive failure of the Catholic laity *vis-à-vis* the Holocaust will be overlooked. There will be no mention that Catholic Austria provided a reported 80 percent of death camp personnel. We get to keep *The Sound of Music* fantasy but must accept in return the myth of *The Deputy*.

For the price of one reputation—that of a severe-looking, hatchet-faced, purse-lipped, theologically-retrograde old man with a pinched disposition—we get a clean moral bill. Not a bad deal, history and truth aside.

KEVIN M. DOYLE



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## What year is this?

Ogdensburg, N.Y.

*To the Editors:* The rather silly mysticism of Jack Morris's letter [March 26] regarding the use of C.E. and A.D. is matched only by the *Commonweal* editors' Lenten resolution never again to let C.E. "slip past our safeguards."

C.E. (for Common Era) has become the accepted designation for dates in place of A.D. (for *Anno Domini*) in academia. Whether or not it began with Jewish protests I do not know. But it has become the established practice as the introduction to Mircea Eliade's prestigious fifteen-volume *Encyclopedia of Religion* attests in opting for C.E. over A.D.

A.D. began with Dionysius Exiguus (referred to irreverently as Denny the Midget) in the sixth century. He equated 1 A.D. with 754 A.U.C. (*Ab Urbe Condita*, from the building of the city, i.e., Rome), the ponderous designation for the Gregorian calendar that had become outdated. In doing so he made an error in judgment that put the date for the birth of Christ back to 4 B.C.! Dennis's innovation did not take immediately. The earliest academic work to use it was Venerable Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* in the eighth century, some 200 years later.

There are numerous calendars in use today. Jews have their own, dating from the beginning of the world. Muslims have theirs, dating from the *hejira* or flight of Mohammed from Medina to Mecca. That the Christian calendar should have become the common calendar for world affairs seems to provide enough justification for the use of C.E. The only important ecumenical thing is that all agree this is 1993!

(MSGR.) JOSEPH G. BAILEY

*From the Editors:* Academia can do as it likes with dates, but we have the blessing of the University of Chicago Press's *A Manual of Style* for continuing to announce that this is the Year of the Lord.

## Witnessing to what?

Rensselaer, Ind.

*To the Editors:* In his article on the new catechism [May 7], Dennis O'Brien expresses dislike for the term "deposit of faith." Yet the term is thoroughly biblical.

Saint Paul uses faith in two different senses. In one sense it means trust in the goodness and promises of God, as in the case of Abraham: "He never questioned or doubted God's promise; rather he was strengthened in faith" (Rom. 4:20).

In another sense it means a set of doctrines or beliefs that, like a deposit, can be passed on to others. "I handed on to you first of all what I myself received" (I Cor. 15:3). And this deposit is inviolable: "If anyone preaches a gospel to you other than the one you received, let a curse be upon him" (Gal. 1:9). So the author of Ephesians can say: "There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Eph. 4:5). And this in varying degrees became the model of the twenty-one general councils of the church.

The "deposit of faith" is not the whole of faith. As O'Brien says: "Emphasis on witnessing in religious instruction is fundamental to the Christian tradition." But you can't witness unless you have something to witness to. Only then can exhortation follow. And the Lord knows we get plenty of that from Rome.

CHARLES J. ROBBINS, C.PP.S.


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### Haitian Update

Focus on Haiti, a Radyo Neg Mawon production heard over shortwave on Radio for Peace International, has created an audio cassette in hopes of educating an English-speaking audience on events in Haiti. This cassette is compiled from selections of previous programming (including UN-OAS envoy Dante Caputo, Jesse Jackson, Bill O'Neill of Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, Jean Dominique of Radio Haiti Inter, Haiti's UN Ambassador Fritz Longchamps and others). Radyo Neg Mawon also produces an hour-long broadcast in Creole over the same airwaves seeking to inform the Haitian people of news and views currently being repressed by the military de facto government. The Creole program is aired Saturdays 20:00 UTC on 13,630 kHz (USB) and 15,030 kHz and repeated 3:00 UTC—and Sundays 11:00 UTC—on those same frequencies plus 7,375 kHz. The program in English is aired Fridays 17:30 UTC and 1:30 UTC and Saturdays 9:30 UTC on the same frequencies. The educational tape is available with a $10 donation in support of Radyo Neg Mawon. Send tax-deductible donation payable to F.O.R./Radyo Mawon, PO Box 557, Warwick, NY 10990.

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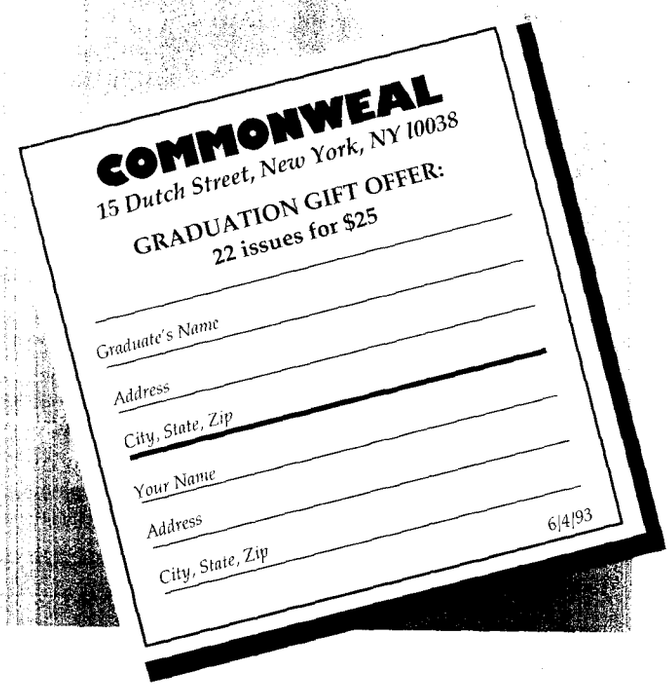


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